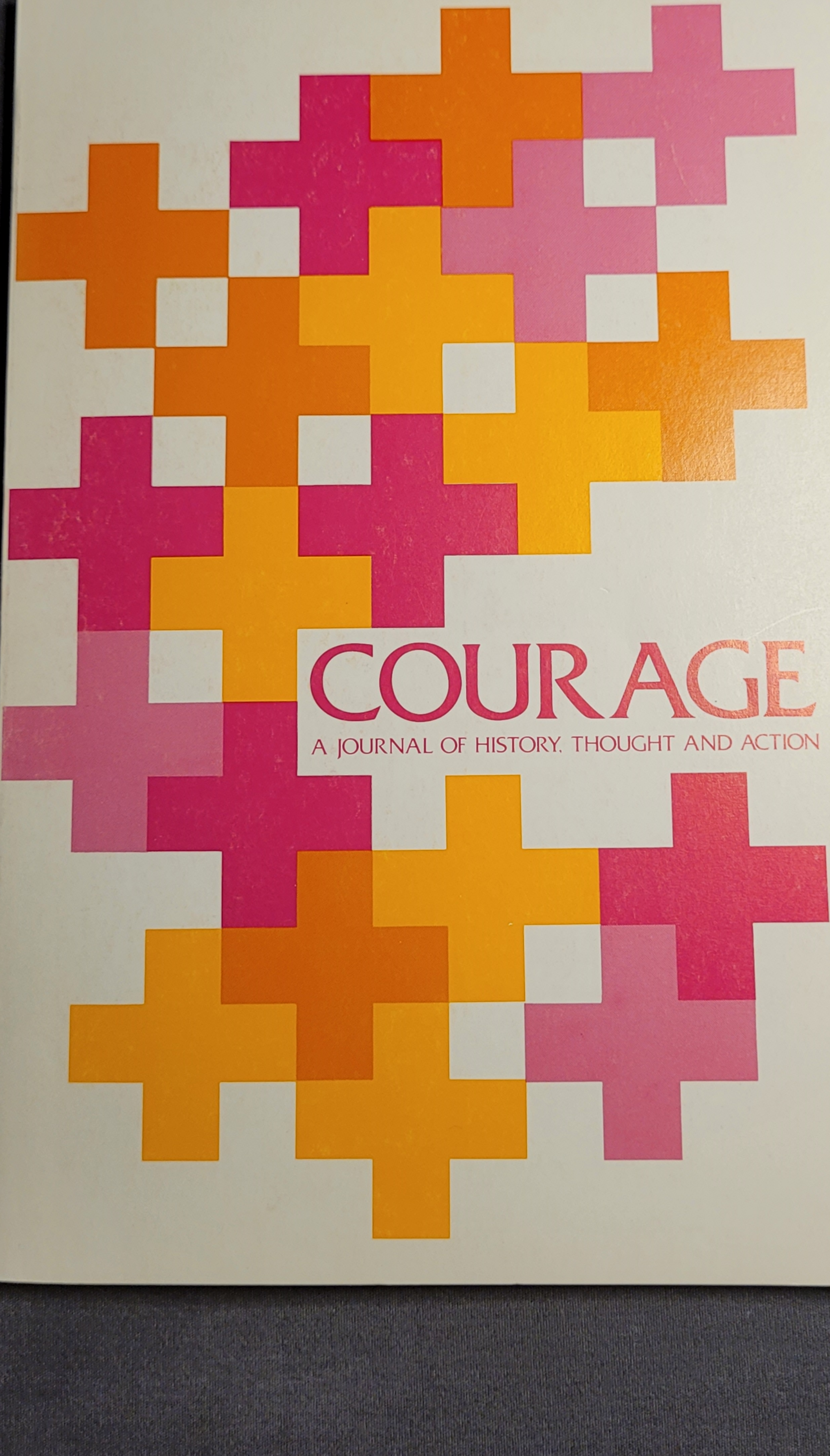

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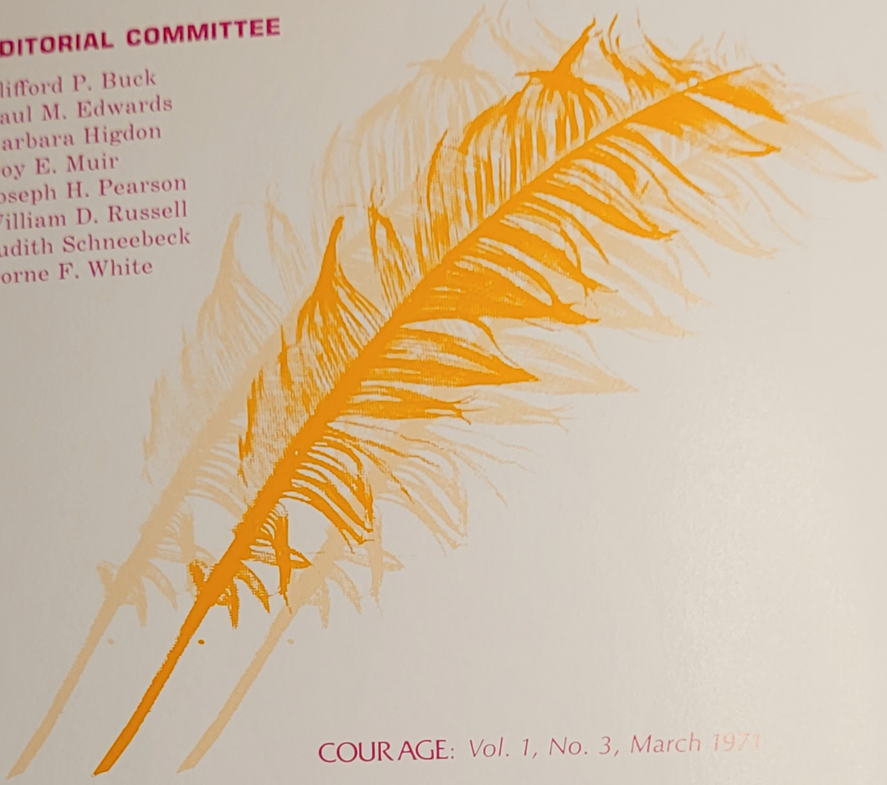

COURAGE: *Vol. 1, No. 3, March 1971*

EDITOR: William D. Russell

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Courage is published quarterly in September, December, March and June by the Venture Foundation, 106 East South, Lamoni, Iowa 50140. Second class postage is paid at Lamoni, Iowa. Permission to mail as a second class publication has been applied for at Lamoni, Iowa. Subscription rate in the United States and Canada is $6.00 per year. Add $1.00 per year for all other countries.

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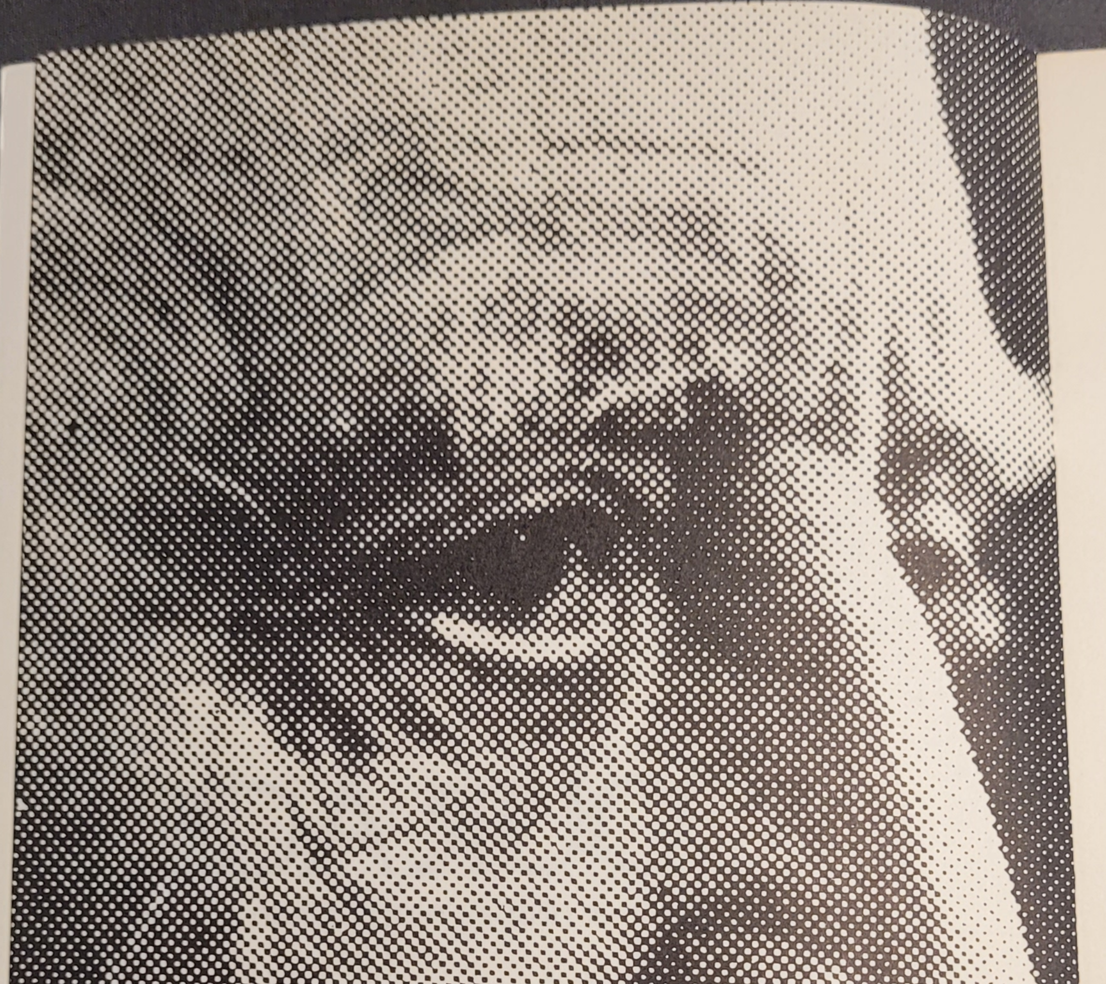

The Challenge to Centralized Power: Zenus H. Gurley, Jr., and the Prophetic Office

Clare D. Vlahos

The RLDS phenomenon of centralized control may be traced to a fateful decision of the body in 1885; that decision rejected the last serious alternative: a redistribution of power to the members themselves.

In 1885 the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, through its Conference body, completed definition of the basic institutional structure that would be retained for much of the following century. This pivotal decision came in answer to an attempted reform by Zenas Gurley, Jr., an effort to limit the growing power of the prophetic office in favor of the Conference and of individual members. The internal conflict which the reform attempt precipitated was clearly a power struggle, for the seat of authority was at stake. Despite its failure, the Gurley reform is historically significant because it forced the church body to consciously endorse the continuing direction of centralized power.

In order to appreciate the complexity of forces operating in this struggle, one must understand three key elements. The important one was the initiator, Zenas Gurley, Jr. This essay will examine his criticism of the prophetic office and the substitute issue of the authority of the sacred books which he hoped to use as a lever to reform that office. In addition, Gurley's concrete plan for implementing his reform and the nature of support and opposition it evoked will be explored.

The second key element was the prophet, Joseph Smith III. His natural opposition to the Gurley plan should be seen both through ideological and personality differences. Smith's political ability as well as Gurley's surfaced in the opening event of the final struggle: the Gurley-Blair *Herald* debate.

The last key element, which arbitrated the struggle, was the General Conference body. Its intended decision was clear, but several obscuring events made its expression ambiguous. This 1885 Conference became the climax of the drama, for it brought together all personalities and issues for a final verdict.

Origins of the Reform

Zenas Gurley, Jr., does not seem an appropriate figure to engineer the Reorganization's most far-reaching reform attempt. He was born in 1842 in Hancock County, Illinois. His father was one of the two men responsible for creating the organization which Joseph Smith III would eventually head as the Reorganization.[1] The younger Gurley himself became an apostle in 1874 and served in various missions in Utah, the Midwest, and the Atlantic coastal area.[2]

Two figures seem to have been important for planting dissatisfaction within Gurley. One was his father whom Gurley viewed as basically a reformer of the church he encountered in the 1850's. Gurley claimed his father's major error was that he did not go far enough in his changes, an opinion the elder Gurley himself may have held in later years.[3]

A second figure was Jason Briggs, the other early shaper of the Reorganization. From Briggs, the younger Gurley seems to have obtained a number of his doctrinal criticisms.[4] Briggs also may have inspired an early informal alliance of sympathetic critics, an alliance which was never so elaborately cultivated as Gurley's.[5] There is evidence of mutual Briggs-Gurley support in such critical times as the 1877 Conference's refusal to sustain Briggs, Gurley's 1879 resignation as apostle, and the 1885 Conference.[6] But their cooperation was evidently ideological and not tactical.[7] They did not attempt a reform strategy together, for while Briggs disagreed with several doctrines, he did not wish any further end than that he be allowed to express his views. After his withdrawal from the church because of being denied access to the *Herald*,[8] he claimed that questions involving the Presidency had played no part in his decision.[9]

What can properly be termed the Gurley reform began to take place in the early 1880's. At this point he began to actively solicit support for a tactical plan he felt could result in the limitation of the prophetic office.[10] This was not his first open sign of dissidence, however. In 1873 Gurley initially refused his call to apostleship on the basis of disbelief in Joseph Smith, Jr.'s revelations.[11] In 1877 disbelief became reform conviction. Gurley related that in a vision he was commanded to return to teaching the gospel and fundamental principles.[12] Gurley was later to interpret this to mean that Joseph Smith, Jr.'s revelations should not be a test of faith.[13] By 1879 a Conference resolution that seemed to make these revelations a law drove Gurley to his resignation as apostle.[14] President Smith at first seemed to want to bridge the gulf between dissenter and Conference. In 1877 he had interpreted Briggs' suspension as little more than silencing;[15] Now at the 1879 Conference he further provided a moderate interpretation of the new Conference resolution that Gurley felt he could accept.[16]

Gurley's Criticism of the Prophetic Office

Gurley made many criticisms, but his reform attempt centered on the prophetic office of the church because he believed that the prophetic office was the primary vestige of the errors of the Nauvoo period. Gurley felt that Joseph Smith, Jr., had perverted the Christian nature of the movement by making himself not the prophet he was called to be but "an essential part of the gospel."[17]

The issue was not whether Joseph Smith, Jr., was a prophet. Gurley believed he had been called to this role. The problem was that a prophet is at all times under judgment. "No servant of Christ should be a guide for you to follow, only as he follows Christ. . . ."[18] If Smith was a prophet then his words could be questioned as could any man's, but he had preferred to be the standard rather than the judged. While giving evidence of some prophetic truth through "manifestations of the Spirit,"[19] he had tried to turn such evidence into a test of critical infallibility that would perennially make him God's spokesman.[20]

Smith had actually succeeded in making himself "God" to the church when it accepted *Doctrine and Covenants* 19:2 enjoining Smith's commandments unconditionally upon his followers.[21] Gurley denounced this action:

> When the church adopted this, they became bound to accept all subsequent revelations without question, so long as Joseph Smith retained his office and position in the church. Thus we see the doctrine of infallibility clearly set up . . . in a trifle over five years from the day of organization, a dogma which required centuries in the Roman Catholic Church. . . . The voting by conference on . . . [various] questions is simply thrown away; because if that dogma is law, then . . . we are *bound* to receive *all* revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, and all that hereafter may be received . . . ; and for any one to say, 'I don't believe the revelation on tithing,' . . . &c., would be equivalent to saying, 'I don't believe in God.' Such a law makes Joseph Smith's power in the church omnipotent. It places him instead of God to us. . . . If this be law, . . . then in that case our salvation depends upon belief in Joseph Smith.

Gurley left no doubt of his position on Smith's unconditional authority: "Upon this question I wish to be distinctly understood, that I have never seen a day according to my recollection, that I believed this dogma for one moment, I do not now, and never expect to. I regard it as a fatal error to Christianity. . . ."[22]

The problem which now had to be faced in the Reorganization, Gurley felt, was caused by the church's unconditionally accepting Joseph Smith, Jr., as a prophet and his revelations en masse. As a result, the absolute office which Smith had created for himself still persisted in the Reorganization. Legally the church had accepted all of Smith's doctrines including those such as tithing and the gathering which were additions to the gospel. What must be changed was the blanket endorsement of the "revelations of Joseph Smith as a rule of faith and practice" to an endorsement of specific doctrines.[23] Until the blanket endorsement was lifted, the real law in the church was not the designated Conference body but the prophet who could legislate with each revelation. Such additions as the local Zion, stakes, high councils, the office of patriarch, and the school of the prophets had no real legal standing; yet they could not be disposed of.[24] It was a case that endorsement of the role of prophet and the acts of receiving revelation allowed the doctrinal contents to slip in uncontested.[25]

A Second Issue: The Authority of the Sacred Books

Gurley found himself in a predicament in trying to translate the issue of an omnipotent prophet into reform strategy. He did not wish to challenge the concept of an authoritative prophet, but that of an infallible one who could not be questioned. Gurley thus settled on an issue which allowed him to oppose omnipotence without opposing the prophet directly. This issue was "the absolute authority of the sacred books" as a test of faith. Gurley realized that the sustaining authority for doctrines of a prophet who was dead and the office he had created could not be derived from the man who presently occupied the office. That sustaining authority lay in the books which recorded the commands originally creating doctrines and prophetic powers. These books as an authoritative whole were a particularly useful tool to perpetuate non-gospel additions. As long as "the three books" and not specific church laws comprised the standard which judged the new prophet and his revelations, the standard was reduced to an act of interpretation.[26] The particular interpretation which Gurley was sure would be accepted was that of the prophet holding office.[27]

Zenas Gurley's opposition to the absolute authority of the sacred books was based primarily on his conception of the individual. A conflict appeared in two basic ways: the nature of revelation and individual responsibility.

Revelation, Gurley believed, was primarily given to individual men. Its forms could be various. Revelation to Joseph Smith as an individual might well be in the form he had presented it. Yet it would be authoritative only for him. All other men's truth was revealed to them by the Spirit of God which thus allowed the choice of whether Smith's revelations were authoritative for them also. As for governing the church, Gurley insisted that no special revelation was necessary. The information provided by Christ's example and the early witnesses of the Bible and Book of Mormon was sufficient.[28]

Joseph Smith had not only attempted to usurp all avenues of divine communication but also the responsibility for properly individual decisions, Gurley thought. He felt Smith had tried to deceive a man into believing that once he joined the church all moral decisions and responsibility for those decisions rested with the prophet.[29] In point of fact, "[since] each person has to make the final decision of what he accepts as true, the judgment is on a man and his work."[30] A man cannot relinquish his responsibility even by voluntary choice.[31]

Gurley's Strategy to Implement His Reform

Gurley's first hopes for redistributing power in the church seemed to rest primarily with the Conference, presumably because this body would benefit from limitations on the prophet. Gurley evidently decided to test this strategy in 1879, for he claimed his resignation was designed to force an issue.[32] After the resignation, the issue of the official position on the *Doctrine and Covenants* was duly presented to the body. Gurley came off fairly well under the First Presidency's interpretation which the Conference accepted, but the result did not completely satisfy him. He considered it a compromise.[33] However, he also discovered that the Presidency's power remained unimpaired since it was allowed by the Conference to make that body's decision. Consequently since the Conference did not respond warmly to Gurley, he soon tried a new reform tactic.[34]

During the following years, Gurley made appeals to both the Twelve and Bishopric.[35] The support Gurley was trying to enlist was not for his reform *per se*, but for his new strategy to which the Presidency presented an obstacle. Basically the new strategy was simply to open the *Herald* to all points of view on controversial issues for one year. Because President Smith had refused similar requests before,[36] Gurley suggested he should be relieved from *Herald* editorship by the Conference. The Presidency and Twelve would jointly make preparations for the year's campaign.[37]

What did Gurley hope to accomplish through a propaganda contest in the *Herald*? This was to be only the preliminary step to enactment of his reform, but it was a necessary one for two reasons. First, Gurley needed to make the opposition who supported the traditional prophet's role look questionable; and second, Gurley had to identify with popular issues to build more support. Gurley hoped to accomplish the first change by at least three methods. First, he would emphasize Joseph Smith, Jr.'s fallibility by stressing such evident "errors" as polygamy and his "carnal" revenge. Next, it would be helpful to drive a wedge between the Restoration attitude of Smith with its Mosaic overtones and the gospel of Christ with which Gurley identified his movement.[38] Finally, the right of members to question authoritative offices must be stressed, particularly in view of the prophet's fallibility. In turn, Gurley hoped to build his own cause by making it less controversial. He could begin by preaching the continuity of his reform with the pre-1860 Reorganization. Also, the stress on enactment of changes by law might prove a competitive authority to President Smith's divine sanction. Gurley also implied that decentralization would mean greater freedom of action in the Conference and quorums, which was undoubtedly true.[39]

After the year of free debate in the *Herald* had taken place, Gurley planned to propose that the church then define an official doctrinal position. To insure that this position would be specific, the church would make its definitions in the form of additions to the "epitome of faith," a listing of church doctrines by Joseph Smith, Jr., which Gurley found palatable. Perhaps due to his apprehension of manipulatable Conferences, the final decisions would be voted on in the individual branches.[40]

By 1884 Zenas Gurley had openly proposed his strategy through brief references in the *Herald* and more detailed outlines to the Twelve and Bishopric. It evoked some support and a great deal of opposition. Among the quorums the First Presidency was most unified in its opinion. Of the two members, President Smith, taking no public position, still made his feelings known, but W. W. Blair proved the most aggressive opponent. The Quorum of Twelve, on the other hand, proved least homogeneous. In the past the Twelve had shown greater tolerance if not zeal for both Briggs and Gurley. The majority by 1885 were siding with Blair, regarding the two as deniers of the faith. On the reform side, Briggs and Gurley were part of the Quorum, and Briggs' brother Edmund was considered by some to be sympathetic. The Bishopric may also have been a source of quiet support. Gurley seems to have been friendly with both George Blakeslee and E. L. Kelley. In later years Kelley admitted association with the Briggs-Gurley group but claimed he severed the relation in 1878 when their sentiments became clear to him. However, Gurley considered Kelley sympathetic as late as 1882 and possibly thought that Blakeslee also supported him. Also, Kelley seems to have represented the Gurley side in an 1886 Conference committee.[41]

Outside the quorums Gurley aroused some active supporters. Within his family he counted the assets of his fairly well-known mother and his brother Edwin. In his home branch of Pleasanton as well as Lone Rock and several other nearby Missouri branches, there were members who would later withdraw in sympathy with Gurley. Most other support rose and fell with the issue and could not be counted on unconditionally.[42]

Opposition to Gurley was more widespread and better defined than the support. The Conference body in 1879 had considered Gurley's resignation "dishonorable" and in 1882 had reacted with hostility to a Gurley sermon.[43] Its views had changed little by 1885. Other evidences of suspicion and criticism occur through Gurley's complaints in 1882[44] and a pointed request by the Lamoni branch for a sermon on "The Divine Calling of Joseph Smith."[45] Gurley could also count among his enemies the former Bishopric he had opposed in a battle of quorums, one of whom, Israel L. Rogers, was active in the 1886 Conference battle with Gurley.[46] In addition, Gurley's association with Jason Briggs seemed to create other enemies. Earlier controversies had also alienated his fellow Utah mission ministers and several prominent members such as Charles Derry.[47]

The hardening attitude of the Twelve reflected a growing change in the general membership. Earlier Briggs and Gurley challenges had been met by indifference. While some action was taken, both Conference and quorums showed a desire to shift responsibility for the action.[48] For example, with Briggs one Conference preferred to set up a committee as its voice rather than vote on the committee decision.[49] All of this was changing, however, as concern over the seriousness of the conflict spread. In general, the membership like the Twelve seemed to be taking a sterner look at Gurley and Briggs as the trouble source.

The Issue of Personality: Gurley and Joseph Smith III

Gurley had been fortunate so far in not being forced to face President Smith directly over an issue. Gurley's strategy of course tried precisely to prevent such confrontation. Although Smith had chosen not to become an antagonist in the struggle, his official position rode on the victory of those opposing Gurley. Besides his position, two other factors influenced the prophet's sympathies: his personal relations with Gurley and his conception of the Gurley reform.

Personal feelings between Smith and Gurley changed during the period of Gurley's ministry, for at the beginning of their acquaintance Smith did not evidence particular bias. At a time when Briggs was already controversial, Gurley received his call to the office of apostle.[50] Both Smith and Gurley could trade anecdotes in their correspondence and share sympathy for a particular difficulty the other faced.[51] Smith even welcomed the free expression of unorthodox Gurley views early in their relationship and promised to print one letter on his own initiative.[52] Nevertheless, the Gurley-Smith correspondence was never intimate,[53] and there is no reason to suspect other aspects of their personal relations were ever closer.

That which lay behind the formal niceties evolved into darker feelings by the early 1880's. Ideological differences undoubtedly played some part, but the root seems to have been Smith's negative reaction to aspects of Gurley's personality. The 1882 Conference appointed both men to present a petition to the Secretary of State concerning polygamy. While they were writing the draft, a disagreement arose over Gurley's characteristic use of invective. Since President Smith prevailed, Gurley waited for their personal presentation to explain his feelings to the Secretary. Smith could hardly conceal his delight in the retelling when the impatient official brusquely cut Gurley off.[54] On another occasion Smith publicly responded to a Gurley sermon whose tone upset him more than the ideas. In both incidents Smith's irritation arose not from critical language but the impression he felt Gurley was trying to create. In short, Smith felt Gurley "was possessed of rather too much ego to keep his balance under all conditions."[55] In fairness to President Smith, it should be noted that his personal dislike of Gurley and his opposition to the reform did not color his estimation of Gurley. Smith never questioned his sincerity even after the withdrawal.[56] Paying tribute to Gurley's honesty, Smith once admitted a personal criticism "would have been an insult . . . from a less-regarded man."[57] Nor did he call Gurley's ability into question: "Elder Gurley was a brilliant man, an eloquent speaker in the pulpit, intelligent and energetic in his quorum work, and always strongly confident of accomplishing that which he undertook to do. . . ."[58]

Interestingly, Zenas Gurley found the exact opposite of qualities in Smith. Perhaps because President Smith was a greater threat to Gurley than the reverse, the flaws he saw in Smith were primarily related to the reform effort. At no time does Gurley seem to have been offended by Smith's personality, but he did question Smith's prophetic talents.[59] Gurley also entertained no high opinion of Smith's *Herald* editorship, a post from which Smith could frustrate the reform propagandizing.[60] When he wondered aloud at Smith's honesty, Gurley also seemed more concerned with the reform.[61] In particular he doubted Smith's firm denials of polygamy in the early church and questioned whether or not he was secretly aware of his father's guilt.[62]

Smith and Gurley's Ideological Differences

President Smith's sympathies lay with Gurley opponents, however, for the more significant reason that he disagreed with the reform principles. To Smith's mind the inherent danger of Gurley's plan was a rigid definition of doctrine. Because he did not accept the reform criticisms of the prophet's role, Smith found the nature of Gurley's proposals upsetting. Gurley seemed to be suggesting an "iron bedstead" of creedal belief which would unnecessarily rigidify the church. Rather than providing license to the prophet, the standard of the three books in Smith's opinion served as protection against a narrow, binding dogma.[63]

Smith shared very little in ideology with the general opposition to Gurley, however. While many criticized Gurley for not accepting the *Doctrine and Covenants* as revelation, Smith admitted one need only accept the revelation *in* the book. And he concurred with Gurley that not all of the book was revelation.[64] The result of accepting three books and not a creed as the faith—particularly when all parts of the books were not inspired—led Smith to a pragmatic viewpoint. "The accepted faith of the church [was] . . . ," he concluded, "what the elders and members agreed to promulgate as the belief."[65] In this same sense, Smith defined the three books as a "standard of reference" or that source from which the members decide what they will believe. However, the doctrines of the gathering and the tithing were not open questions. They might or might not be proved in the three books, but the doctrines were authoritative because the people had accepted them.[66]

Smith here sounded quite similar to Gurley. Both agreed that the membership itself must agree by what faith it would be bound. Smith suggested that the nature of the faith would be known well enough without specific definitions, which he felt would be harmful to individuals who might tend toward the orthodox periphery. Gurley, however, argued that at that time there was no great freedom to believe, as evidenced by the attacks on his own alleged "denial of the faith." Because the authority in defining belief was being denied to the membership, the leadership had usurped the right to define. The situation was simply one of trading democratic authority by which the people bind themselves for an imposed authority by which others bind them.

Smith's Tactical Strategy: Containment of the Reform

In spite of his ideological opposition, President Smith initially showed no inclination to attack the reform. Perhaps he recognized the inconsistency between a creedless faith and an attack for false belief. At any rate, in 1879 Smith interpreted the church position on the *Doctrine and Covenants* in such a way that both Gurley and Briggs felt they could accept it.[67] The proof that President Smith was not ready to quash the reform attempt lies in his rejection of Gurley's resignation as apostle and his insistence that he remain and combat the error "within."[68] Gurley thus had to take his resignation to the Conference for action.[69]

President Smith may not have directly opposed the Gurley reform at first, but he was far from uninvolved. Smith seemed to be trying to set aside a security compound within the body for the reformers. It was a two-way type of protection. On the one hand, a screen of toleration was erected in the form of the 1879 compromise.[70] Smith had also made rulings in regard to the 1877 Conference action against Briggs which allowed the Conference to silence him but made it practically impossible for that body to remove him as an apostle.[71] However, the protective barrier also extended in the other direction. Smith would allow deviations in thought but not where they might have too profound an influence. Blair rather than Briggs was called to the position of counselor as a result.[72] Some Gurley materials were allowed in the *Herald* but not those condemning Joseph Smith, Jr., for polygamy. Most importantly, President Smith acknowledged the potential impact of a Gurley-sponsored free debate in the *Herald.* He flatly refused to let it take place.[73]

Smith's Role in the Gurley-Blair Debate

There is an indication that the security barrier was beginning to buckle under Gurley's activity by 1885. As a result, W. W. Blair combatted the growing reform with the first outright attack emanating from the Presidency. The Blair attack was undoubtedly his own idea and not Smith's carefully formulated plan. It can be stated, though, that Blair must have received an endorsement for what began as an attack on Gurley and became a debate, with Gurley making rebuttals.

The supposition of Smith's endorsement of the Blair attack—if not the Blair ideas—stems from three facts. Blair was the only other member of the Presidency, which gave his voice a great deal of importance. In addition, Smith had to approve the Blair articles for publication because he was the *Herald* editor, a circumstance of added importance in view of the *Herald's* semi-official nature at that time. All official announcements, news from the Presidency, and much information to individuals appeared in the *Herald.* Finally, President Smith apparently confirmed his endorsement of Blair's attacks by the political move of installing him as associate editor of the *Herald* fourteen days after the exchange ended.

President Smith did more than endorse Blair in his effort to discourage the spread of the reform. He cleverly split the opposition by preventing Briggs' entrance into the debate.[74] One result was that not all the membership grasped the significance of the event. The Conference in a resolution interpreted the Gurley-Blair series as personal attacks by two quorum members, a damaging blow to Gurley's strategy.[75] Briggs' appearance and discussion by members supporting Blair could well have revealed the extent of the criticism to those still on the outside of the controversy.

At the 1885 Conference, Smith took advantage of the situation when the Conference prepared to sustain its officers when he addressed the body concerning the three controversial apostles: "The voice of the Spirit is that E. C. Briggs be sustained for the present. J. W. Briggs and Z. H. Gurley are in your hands, to approve or disapprove as wisdom may direct. Be merciful, for to him that is merciful shall mercy be shown."[76] In other words, the strategy now was to relax the protective barrier a bit from the other side. As Gurley seemed to be threatening to break out, Smith was no longer holding off a hostile Conference to such an extent as he had in 1879 by his moderate ruling. After the Conference had refused to sustain the two men, a request was sent to the Presidency from the Twelve asking for an interpretation of the action.[77] In effect, this was asking the judge for a sentence, and the ruling which came certainly placed Briggs and Gurley squarely within the security compound once again: "We answer that they are still members of their quorum, and hold priesthood; but by reason of the vote not to sustain, are not authorized to act as ministers for the church, until such time as the disability imposed by the vote of conference is removed."[78] President Smith was once again indicating that he wanted Gurley and Briggs, and he would tolerate men with unorthodox ideas. But he would not allow a structural reform.[79]

Gurley's Reform Strategy in the "Debate"

The events of 1885 were pivotal from another perspective. The strategy which Gurley had been advocating for a number of years—free debate followed by a common decision on the faith—had not yet been put to a test.[80] Up to 1885 Gurley realized he was limited in what he could write for the *Herald*.[81] This prompted his request for President Smith's removal from the editorship to allow a completely free exchange.[82]

There had evidently been little response from the quorums. Gurley thus may have realized that a more indirect tactic than quorum pressure would be necessary to gain entry into the *Herald*. That opportunity came with the Blair attack on Gurley's basic reform ideas. Responding with full political awareness of his opportunity, Gurley insisted on the right to respond to Blair's three articles with three of his own. These three, extending from February 14 to March 14, 1885, used the occasion to spell out the actual nature of his reform. As mentioned previously, the exchange could have been more impressive and thus of greater benefit to Gurley if Smith had allowed other respondents. This was vitally significant to Gurley, for the whole enactment of his program depended on a popular reversal of the opposition majority.[83]

1885 Conference: Gurley and Briggs' Absences

The April 1885 Conference proved to be merely a continuation of the *Herald* contest. On one side, neither Gurley nor Jason Briggs attended Conference, nor did Edmund C. Briggs. Both Jason and E. C. Briggs reported to the Conference by letter, but none reported to the Quorum of Twelve. The major question, however, is whether Jason Briggs and Gurley's absences were related to the *Herald* debate. At least four explanations are possible: (1) both men found it impossible to attend; (2) neither man was especially concerned about attending; (3) the absence was a precautionary measure against Conference hostility; or (4) it was a boycott of protest against the Blair attacks.[84]

The first is discountable because neither man ever revealed a legitimate excuse at a time when it would have been helpful, and the second is doubtful on the basis of the extreme controversy then raging. These two reasons would suggest either that coincidentally both Briggs and Gurley were unconcerned about Conference or both had pressing business. Gurley's absence the previous year for business reasons had, at least, produced a letter to the Twelve.[85] The third reason is not probable either. It presupposes a knowledge of the Conference mood. Gurley and Briggs knew feelings were aroused, yet they had no way of determining in what direction. If they had supposed the Conference to be seeking punitive measures, their tendency would probably have been to defend themselves in person. At least their absence as events transpired only harmed their cause. To regard the absence as a protest is proper, first, because both men harbored antagonisms from the *Herald* affair, Gurley from the Blair condemnation and Briggs from his gagging.[86] In addition, Gurley in later defense mentioned the Presidential accusation of denying the faith as important. That charge too may be traced to Blair in the debate.[87]

The Quorum of Twelve took immediate action against its absentee apostles. It censured all three and explained its action on the basis of nonattendance in a time of crisis and failure to send a reason. The Conference awaited the moment to sustain and then asked President Smith's advice, as previously noted, which spared E. C. Briggs but delivered the others to the body. E. C. was then sustained while the other two were not.[88]

The 1885 Conference gave no reason for its action, and the 1886 body was spared the effort by the withdrawals.[89] One explanation—that a refusal to sustain upheld the Quorum censure—was suggested by an 1886 committee. By then the Conference did not feel any reason was necessary, and the report was not accepted.[90] However, the committee explanation was inadequate for the very reason that the Conference had no scruples in sustaining the censured E. C. Briggs. The failure to report to the Quorum was minimized as the real cause by the Briggs reports to the Conference body and the lifting of E. C. Briggs' censure when he later presented a valid reason for missing.[91] The Quorum evidently felt the justification of its action lay in the absence and not the report. However, the Quorum explanation of nonattendance was evidently a cover. As President of the Twelve, Jason Briggs noted that it had never been the policy to require attendance at every Conference.[92]

The Real Meaning of the Conference Action

That Quorum and Conference concern lay elsewhere than absenteeism was revealed by the first business of the session. A resolution was presented to restrict *Herald* articles.[93] The Twelve presented an amendment stating that representatives were under obligation "to uphold and defend" the faith of the church.[94] Evidently the Twelve's concern had been evoked by the *Herald* series also, for in February a majority rejected Jason Briggs' attempt to convene over the reform controversy.[95]

It is doubtful if the Conference action would have taken the form it did but for two factors. First, President Smith seemed to communicate a desire for this particular action. He delivered the two men into the Conference's hands at the moment to sustain, not when resolutions were being entertained. That he desired the refusal to sustain is suggested by his protection of E. C. Briggs whom he did wish sustained. The second factor explains the subterfuge in explanations. The Conference did not have a valid charge against Gurley and Briggs. It had tried once before to remove Briggs in 1877 for disbelief in particular doctrines and ended up having all charges nullified. The simple reason was ironically the thing Gurley was fighting against: the church had no creed. A heresy or charge of denial was impossible so long as no one knew what the faith was. Only if Gurley had been successful in his reform could he have been charged and removed.[96]

There is a broader meaning to the Conference action than its disapproval of the Gurley-Blair debate. Part of that meaning dealing with Smith's security barrier has already been mentioned. The other deals with the Conference itself. By the only means it had, the popular voice in the body rejected the Gurley reform, although it is doubtful that the body fully understood the reform. It responded to Gurley as a "denier of the faith" which, in terms of that body's understanding, was an accurate charge. Gurley had attacked what many considered to be the faith. The real misunderstanding lay in what that faith was: the Conference's or Gurley's conception.

Withdrawal of the Reformers

At the 1886 assembly Gurley, his family, and Jason Briggs withdrew from the church. Documents of withdrawal and reasons were presented, trial rules dispensed with, and the names removed from the records. The dramatic exodus of two apostles for the most part was not contested, but after the reform danger had passed, the general verdict seemed to be that withdrawal had been unnecessary. Because he straightforwardly defended his action in the *Herald*, many accepted Briggs' explanation for both men. However accurate Briggs' reasons, Gurley withdrew for different reasons than being barred from the *Herald*.[97]

If the *Herald* ban was not the problem, neither were the nine contested doctrines that Gurley and Briggs presented in a statement to the 1886 Conference.[98] The mere presence of these same doctrines for a number of years had not previously pushed Gurley to withdraw. The real reason is suggested in an overlooked remark of Briggs' in which he attributed his *Herald* barring to narrowed principles of toleration.[99] In Gurley's case the greater intolerance eventually transformed opposition into a final defeat for his reform. The defeat was much more final than a censure for Conference absence. First, what he considered to be past accomplishments of the reform were being erased. The 1879 Presidential report, the final statement of beliefs to the Secretary of State, the 1884 resolution which made "local commandments" of the *Doctrine and Covenants* not binding—these successes—had been efforts to disestablish *Doctrine and Covenants* authority and the prophet's powers.[100] The combination of a Presidential attack and the refusal to sustain him meant the church was moving to its pre-1879 position, Gurley stated.[101] The second and more convincing piece of evidence of defeat was that the reform itself could no longer continue. Gurley's means of carrying on the reform had been indefinitely closed to him: the *Herald*, ministerial preaching, and the quorums.[102]

It is possible that the reform defeat did not have to force a Gurley withdrawal. Basically the withdrawal was due to a failure of strategy on both sides, but how that strategy could have been different is not clear. The very thing which Smith desired—to contain the reform within safe limits—was the one intolerable to Gurley, for silencing left him with no base of operations. Another factor which goaded him into withdrawing was the Conference failure to explain its action,[103] even though the Conference could not logically do this since it had no valid charges. Thus, there was only one course for Gurley because his purpose within the institution had been taken from him. It was April 1886 before Gurley decided to withdraw. His act was not one of impetuous anger but a realization of the inevitability of the situation.[104]

Cause of the Reform's Failure

If handled differently, Gurley's reform still would not have succeeded. The two elements that his reform depended upon seem to have been popularly rejected. First, Gurley's appeal to the mass of church members rested on their choosing greater freedom to define beliefs. No evidence ever appeared that this ultimate in Gurley principles was of great value to most people in the church. In fact, the opposite is suggested by a common charge during the Blair debate. Here interest was not centered on possible Gurley inadequacies in proving the error of specific Restoration doctrines, but rather concern that he had "oppose(d) a 'thus saith the Lord' to the church" seemed paramount.[105] Gurley unwittingly attacked not only error but assurance. He was trying to attract supporters at the same time he attacked the authority which verified the faith of those potential supporters. His opponents triumphed by their appeal to assurance, not freedom.

The people also rejected the other basic element which doomed the Gurley reform. Gurley based his later strategy on a final decision of the people which would reject the Smith prophetic role for doctrines more in keeping with the gospel of Christ.[106] Gurley could not influence such a vote to his side because that decision had previously been made in 1860. The people at that time had accepted this concept of prophet when they chose Joseph Smith III to lead them. They had not directly rejected the gospel but had merely affirmed the Restoration interpretation as the gospel. To Gurley this was a rejection, for he felt interpretations must be judged also. But Gurley fought a fruitless contest, for his defeat already lay in the past.[107]

As a result of Gurley's reform defeat, the Reorganized Church clearly defined its seat of power within the prophetic office. The 1885 Conference gave the prophet no power which in practice he did not already exercise. What it did do was to beat back the last attempt to date to relocate the center of control. By its refusal to accept any version of Gurley's reform, the church actually accepted the tenets that the prophet rather than the Conference would continue to direct through the legislative power of unrestricted prophecy[108] and that the prophet's power to interpret would not be limited through specific definitions. Later unsuccessful attempts by other quorums to limit the prophet's power have only challenged its degree, not its supremacy. Audacious as it was, only a fundamental reform such as Gurley's could have succeeded. Gurley understood that the only restriction on an office of theoretically limitless authority must be a relocation of its actual power and responsibility.

1. Joseph Smith and Heman C. Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* (Lamoni, Iowa: The Board of Publication of the Reorganized Church, 1920), Vol. III, 200-201, 742-747.

2. *History IV*, 232, 367, 423, 444; Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., to Council of Twelve (Pleasanton, Iowa: March 26, 1884).

3. Zenas H. Gurley, Jr. "History of the Reorganization," pamphlet (Pleasanton, Iowa: May 12, 1886), 4.

4. *The Saints' Herald* (Lamoni, Iowa: official publication of the RLDS Church), Vol. XXXII, 138-139; *History IV*, 213-217, 239-240.

5. *History IV*, 730. Edmund L. Kelley, later Bishop of the church, is the source of the report that there was a group of members sympathetic to Briggs' point of view. Kelley noted that he was approached by Briggs about joining this group in 1878.

6. Joseph Smith to Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 1, pp. 264-265 (Dec. 15, 1877); *Herald* XXXII, 138-139; *History IV*, 524-525, 561-562, 730.

7. There is no evidence of cooperation in planning reform strategy before the crises in which they did aid each other. Thus, Briggs and Gurley's relation was evidently only ideological in the sense that they ended up on the same side in a crisis. But Briggs seems to have had no part in Gurley's elaborate propaganda scheme by which he hoped to persuade the church majority to his viewpoint.

8. Briggs testified in court in 1894 that "I did not withdraw because of any change in doctrine, or because anything new was brought in, but it was the interpretation put upon certain lines of policy and doctrine; and while others were allowed to discuss those lines of policy I was not permitted to do so, but was shut out. . . . That was what I objected to, and not to any change in the doctrine of the church" (*The Temple Lot Case*, trial recording, [Salt Lake City, Utah; Modern Microfilm Co.], p. 400).

9. *Temple Lot*, 406-407.

10. Gurley - Council.

11. Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., "Biographical Sketch of Zenas H. Gurley, Jr." *Biographical and Historical Record of Ringgold and Decatur Counties, Iowa*, pp. 539-544, (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1887), p. 542.

12. Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., to Fred Johnson, letter, RLDS archives (Pleasanton, Iowa: June 18, 1886); *Herald* XXX, 312.

13. Joseph Smith and W. W. Blair to Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 1, pp. 491-493 (Oct. 23, 1878); "Biographical," 542.

14. Smith-Gurley (Oct. 23, 1878); "Biographical," 542; *History IV*, 259-260, 283-285.

15. *History IV*, 213-217.

16. *History IV*, 259-260, 283-285; "Biographical," 542.

17. *Herald* XXXII, 217; Gurley-Johnson.

18. Gurley-Johnson.

19. *Ibid.* Gurley claimed Joseph Smith, Jr., had shown indisputable error. In particular his prophetically true forecast of the Civil War rebellion (1832-1833) had been succeeded by an erroneous prophecy four years later at Salem, Massachusetts.

20. *Herald* XXX, 312; XXXII, 139-142, 217.

21. *Doctrine and Covenants* 19:2a, b read: "Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words, and commandments, which he shall give unto you, as he received them, walking in all holiness before me; for his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith; for by doing these things, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. . . ."

22. *Herald* XXXII, 108. Gurley suggested that Joseph Smith, Jr., returned to Mosaic values in his attempt to transcend the role of prophet. He considered it "a complete *return* to the *old covenant*, under which the prophet was God's mouth-piece to the church—but in the *New*, Jesus speaks the word of life, which *word* will judge the world . . ." (Gurley-Johnson).

23. "History of Reorg."; "Biographical," 542; *Herald* XXXI, 753-754.

24. *History IV*, 259-260; "Biographical," 542; *Herald* XXXI, 753-754.

25. Gurley implied at various times that this making of the prophet into the law itself seemed to encourage extravagances with civil law also. Examples were the attempt to violently retake Missouri land (*Herald* XXXII, 169-173) and encouragement of illegal mob attacks upon Utah Mormonism by the Reorganization leadership (*Herald* XXXII, 734-735).

26. In the absence of church law, Gurley himself used the Bible and Book of Mormon—especially their references to Christ—to judge controversial doctrines. He found the Book of Mormon less objectionable than the *Doctrine and Covenants* because he felt Joseph Smith had only been the translator and because it proved a more stable standard than the *Doctrine and Covenants* which might at any time have to include a new false doctrine as part of its standard.

27. *Herald* XXXII, 169-173; *History IV*, 259, 283-285, 524-525; "Biographical," 542.

28. Gurley-Johnson.

29. *Herald* XXXII, 169-173.

30. *Ibid.* XXX, 312.

31. *Ibid.* XXXI, 753-754.

32. *Herald* XXVI, 369-371.

33. "Biographical," 542.

34. *History IV*, 283-285.

35. Gurley-Council; Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., to unnamed addressee, letter, RLDS archives (Pleasanton, Iowa: June 14, 1882). Although the addressee of this letter is not mentioned by name, the text of the letter suggests Gurley is writing to E. L. Kelley. Kelley was Gurley's missionary partner before Kelley's call to Bishop's Counselor.

36. Joseph Smith to Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 2, pp. 149-156 (April 2, 1879).

37. Gurley-Council.

38. Gurley characterized the situation in which God speaks through one authoritative prophetic mouthpiece as Mosaic. The gospel conception of revelation allowed direct communication between God and every man through the Spirit.

39. *Herald* XXX, 312; XXXII, 169-173; "Biographical," 541; Gurley-unnamed addressee.

40. Gurley-Council; *Herald* XXXI, 753-754; XXVI, 369-371.

41. *Herald* XXXII, 225; *History IV*, 260-261, 478, 481, 526-528, 730; Gurley-unnamed addressee.

42. *History IV*, 525, 561-562.

43. Joseph Smith, *Joseph Smith III and the Restoration*, ed. Mary Audentia Smith Anderson (Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing House, 1952), 295-296.

44. *Herald* XXIX, 71.

45. *Ibid.* XXVI, 369.

46. *History IV*, 195-197.

47. Joseph Smith to Jason W. Briggs, letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 1, pp. 150-153 (May 1, 1877).

48. Joseph Smith to Jason Briggs, letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 2, pp. 74-75 (January 26, 1879).

49. Smith-Gurley (Dec. 15, 1877).

50. William W. Blair, *The Memoirs of President W. W. Blair*, compiled by Elder Frederick B. Blair (Lamoni, Iowa: Herald Publishing House, 1909), 176.

51. Joseph Smith to Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 1, pp. 434-435 (Aug. 20, 1878).

52. Joseph Smith to Jason Briggs, letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 1, pp. 127-128 (April 5, 1877).

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Smith and Restoration*, 298-302.

55. *Ibid.*, 295-296.

56. *History IV*, 561.
57. Smith-Gurley (April 2, 1879).
58. *Smith and Restoration*, 298.
59. Zenas H. Gurley, Jr. to ______ Dillore, letter, RLDS archives (Pleasanton, Iowa: April 1, 1893).
60. Gurley-Council.
61. "Biographical," 541, 543.
62. Joseph Smith to Zenas H. Gurley, Jr., letter, RLDS archives, Joseph Smith Letterbook No. 2, pp. 274-277 (July 24, 1879).
63. *History IV*, 484, 539-541; *Herald* XXXI, 753-754.
64. Smith-Gurley (Oct. 23, 1878).
65. Smith-Gurley (Dec. 15, 1877).
66. *Herald* XXXII, 225.
67. *History IV*, 283-285; "Biographical," 542.
68. Smith-Gurley (Oct. 23, 1878).
69. *History IV*, 283-285.
70. "Biographical," 542.
71. *History IV*, 195-197.
72. *Blair*, 176.
73. Smith-Gurley (April 2, 1879); *Herald* XXXIII, 383.
74. *Temple Lot*, 400; *Herald* XXXIII, 383.
75. *History IV*, 477.
76. *History IV*, 479 (footnote 2).
77. *Ibid.*, 483.
78. *Herald* XXXII, 305.
79. *History IV*, 524-525.
80. Gurley-Council.
81. Smith-Gurley (April 2, 1879); Smith-Briggs (May 1, 1877).
82. Gurley-Council.
83. *Herald*, various places in Vol. XXXII.
84. *History IV*, 476.
85. Gurley-Council.
86. *Herald* XXXIII, 394.
87. "Biographical," 542.
88. *History IV*, 477-481.
89. *Ibid.*, 483.
90. *Ibid.*, 523.
91. *History IV*, 522-523.
92. *Ibid.*, 487.
93. *Ibid.*, 477.
94. *Ibid.*, 478.
95. *Ibid.*, 487.
96. *Ibid.*, 479.
97. *Herald* XXXIII, 394; *Ibid.* XXXIII, 383; *History IV*, 561-562.
98. *History IV*, 524-525.
99. *Herald* XXXIII, 394.
100. *History IV*, 524-525.
101. "Biographical," 542.
102. Gurley-Dillore.
103. Gurley-Dillore; "Biographical," 543.
104. "Biographical," 543. Either the date of April 1886 is approximate or Gurley and Briggs wrote their withdrawal document of March 28, 1886, before a definite decision was reached. Gurley gave the April 1886 date in an article written in 1887 so he should have remembered.
105. *Herald* XXXII, 121.
106. Gurley-Johnson (see also fn. 37).
107. *Ibid.*, XXX, 312.
108. In the context of Gurley's argument it can be contended that the Conference power to approve a new revelation is not actually a real restriction

on the prophet's power to legislate. (1) It would be an act of disobedience and inconsistency to reject a revelation while accepting the commandment to receive all revelations of the prophet (D. and C. 19:2). (2) This power actually belongs to the prophet, for it was he who originally gave the Conference this supposed prerogative to question revelations. (3) In actual practice the Conference does not use its supposed power, thus the power cannot be considered a real one.

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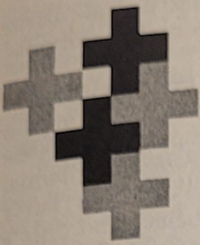

The Population Crisis: Crisis in Values

William L. Raiser

Our difficulty is not with population but with our lack of willingness and ability to deal with value questions.

Humans have a remarkable ability to look a problem straight in the I and see only them. Such is the case with population. There are always too many of *them*, or *they* are in the wrong place. Each of us is a drop in the world's population ocean. The problem is us. Since this is true and since we are humans capable of self-reflection and action, the solution lies within our individual and collective grasp.

The most common conception of the population problem is that of sheer numbers—size. We have too many people now; and if not now, we will have in the very near future. This, however, is a moot point. Size is a relative term, not an absolute. We must have some standards or guidelines. Therefore, when one says that the population of the world is too large, the logical question is, according to what criteria?

A second conception implied in many discussions is that the population problem is one of distribution. We may not have too many people but have too many in the wrong places. One need only view the congestion of megalopolis as it stretches from Boston to Washington, D.C. Or we find people in the wrong country, India which has an agricultural deficiency versus the United States which has an agricultural surplus.

Third, the population problem may be one of composition. There are too many of the wrong kind of people in the world: Russians, blacks, poor. The good guys must prosper, and the bad guys must be encouraged or forced to dwindle.

Each of these conceptions holds an element of truth but each is largely inadequate. The population problem is not isolated from the other problems which face this nation and the world today—war, racial strife, student unrest, pollution. Each of these points to our inadequacy as individuals and as groups of individuals. We have failed to accept the responsibilities which accompany the opportunities of life.

The impression is given by many today that the era of population control has suddenly dawned upon the world's horizon. This implies that individuals and societies have not practiced population control in the past, which is grossly absurd. A woman's biological potential to bear children, fecundity, is something on the order of thirty children per woman. It is quite obvious that no society and only a few individuals have maintained anywhere near this level of fertility. Therefore, some form of fertility control is practiced almost universally, and this has always been the case. The particular form of control and the degree of control have varied widely from time to time and place to place.

Do we have too many people? Evidently not. If as individuals and societies we thought there were, then as individuals and societies we would institute available control mechanisms to diminish, halt, or reverse growth. Obviously, however, we cannot stop growing until they (Russians, blacks, poor) do; and equally as obviously, they cannot stop growing until we do.

Another reason we do not think there are too many people can be traced to our faith in technology. I think that this faith is probably not misplaced. I am firmly convinced that we are capable of supporting in a state of material luxury and abundance many times the present population. However, what is so all fired good about having millions and millions of people? The crucial factor is the quality one imparts to life, not the quantity of lives one imparts.

Technology will get us into a bind if we do not use it wisely. We are already learning the adverse side effects of technology used with disregard in the varied forms of pollution plaguing our society today.

The quality of interaction between husband and wife and between parents and children quickly reaches a point of diminishing return as family size increases. This indicates that as long as we see the family as the center of primary relationships, population growth mitigates against quality life experiences.

Increases in population size are often directly linked to increases in the organizational complexity of society. The adverse effects of such complexity have been well documented—alienation, the organizational man, mass society, the silent majority.

By stepping back and taking the long, wide view of the population issue, we see several things. First, we are dealing with a vital issue. This is true by definition since we are dealing with life and death. Second, we are dealing with a value issue. This also is true by definition since a problem can be identified only in relation to a specific value system. Third, we have the means to effect a solution to the problem.

The means of solving the problem have already been suggested. It is possible that we may simply want to reconstruct our conception of the situation. The facts of the situation do not speak for themselves.

The mere statement of population size, distribution, or composition is not sufficient to indicate a problem. This can be quite clearly seen from the fact that there are a number of divergent interpretations of the present world scene. The interpretations range all the way from those who predict imminent disaster to those who are extremely optimistic about the numerous signs of man's evolutionary progress.

If we admit the existence of a problem, we can note also that man has had many thousands of years practice at controlling the size, distribution, and composition of the population. As a result of this experience, we have available to us numerous means of control, e.g. the hydrogen bomb, migration, cars, contraceptives. The solution, then, involves education in the use of appropriate means and the dissemination of the appropriate technology.

Having arrived at the above, however, we will also note that our ability to educate and disseminate is largely determined by the nature of the particular society in question. Depending upon whether it is at war or not; whether it needs laborers or not; whether it is Asian, Latin American, European, or African, the society will be more or less open to various population policies. With this, we come to the heart of the problem. We are dealing with a vital value issue.

The difficulty, therefore, is not with population but with our lack of willingness and ability to deal with value questions. Sociologists have noted and some have lamented the end of ideology. Religionists have noted and some have lamented the secularization of society. Each of these developments in conjunction with the contemporary focus on rationality in the form of science and technology have diminished our individual and collective ability to see and to act upon the value base of our problems.

I am suggesting that the world has a conservation problem. A species of vital importance is rapidly becoming extinct. That species is the religious man. This statement is not meant to make church members feel good, for unfortunately, the institutional church is often most inclined to excommunicate the religious man. This is the man who because of his faith in and commitment to God believes in the ultimate worth of the individual and has faith in the basic goodness of man.

The world today is facing a value crisis. We are moving ever more quickly toward ends we know not. Ends are chosen on the basis of values. Therefore, we need men and institutions qualified and willing to deal with value questions. The problem—be it population, war, civil rights—lies not with them, whoever "they" may be, but with each of us. We need to be men and institutions committed to the task of discovering what it means to be loving in the ever unfolding now.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Bogue, Donald J. *Principles of Demography.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969. (See especially Chapter 20.)

Ehrlich, Paul R. *The Population Bomb.* New York: Ballantine Books, 1968.

Ehrlich, Paul R., and Anne H. Ehrlich. *Population, Resources, Environment.* San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & Co., 1970.

Ford, Thomas R., and Gordon F. De Jong. *Social Demography.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.

Fuller, R. Buckminster. *Utopia or Oblivion.* New York: Bantam Books, 1969.

Thomlinson, Ralph. *Population Dynamics.* New York: Random House, 1965.

Wrong, Dennis H. *Population & Society.* New York: Random House, 1967. (An excellent short introduction to the major concepts and techniques of demography.)

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On Reality and Revolution: A Reply to Roy Muir

Joseph H. Pearson

We live in a time when Senate bathrooms are bombed and Asian children are burned and mutilated. It is not a time for Christians to accept simplistic notions of violence and the grim realities that contribute to violent situations.

Roy Muir's editorial, "Reality, Revolution, and Revelation" (December, 1970, pp. 113-114) invites comment. Realizing that I, too, am limited by my white middle-class background and my position within an "establishment," I feel that this editorial reflects a misunderstanding of revolutionaries and embraces a media-distorted concept of violence. Revolutionaries, in Muir's view, are impatient, shortsighted, unrelated to reality, lacking in participation and perseverance, and sin of all sins, blatantly un-Christian—in the "true-Christian" sense of the word. Regarding violence, many in the United States are "running scared" of potential violence from blacks, students, and even priests. There have been riots in ghettos, research centers have been bombed, and a group of priests, nuns and other "mad revolutionaries" have been accused of plotting to blow up underground heating ducts and kidnap an official. The media have gotten much mileage out of such events or pseudo-events and a multitude of citizens is just sure that violent overthrow is as potentially imminent today as once the radio public was certain that an invasion from an Orson Wellesian make-believe Martian army was under way!

Such portrayal of revolutionaries (whoever they may be) and violence (whatever that includes) offends my grasp of the contemporary situation, and, for whatever it may be worth, calls for a response. I would like some clarification. Just who are the shortsighted revolutionaries? What is included in the definition of violence? I look to the editorial itself for some answer but find none. Consider this passage:

> Others react violently. Bitter at the alternatives which life offers, they seek to destroy in a rage of suicidal madness. They live in a distant world having little or no relationship to reality. These are the men who bomb, who kill, who burn. They naively assume that they can create a new world by destroying portions of the current one. . . . Lacking the courage to live life, they escape through their own distorted world. They bring no significant change to mankind.

The "they" implies some specific antecedent, but all I can find are some references to "revolutionaries." The "they" specifically refers to those who bomb, burn, and kill. But are there not many who bomb, burn, and kill who would never be regarded as revolutionaries?

Perhaps, as suggested above, Muir refers to black militants. Are black militants bitter at the alternatives life offers? Do they seek to destroy in a rage of suicidal madness? Do they live in a distant world with little relationship to reality? These are pretty stout questions. I, for one, feel unqualified to answer them. I suppose that this is the reason I would have appreciated a little more specificity in the editorial.

Looking at things realistically, however, one must admit that there is a black revolution occurring in the United States. "Black Power" is its symbol, slogan, and concise statement of affirmation. Violence does have a certain relationship to this revolution. Let us consider some of the ways. There have been riots in ghettos. Black students have been shot and killed in places like Jackson, Mississippi. There are groups of militant blacks who have armed themselves with weapons and skills for possible combat. Fred Hamptons have been killed while sleeping in bed. As the above general catalog suggests, however, there has been at least a twofold aspect of the violence. There has been some violence perpetrated *by* blacks. There has been much more violence perpetrated *against* blacks. For most of us, however, our media-enforced consciousness confirms our suspicions that blacks are volatile, unstable, and are to be feared.

"Black Power," more than a statement of revolution by overthrow, is a statement of revolution by self-affirmation—a grasp of the truth that black is beautiful. Don Lee, poet in residence at Cornell University and an angry, militant black man, offers some insights into a deeper understanding of the nature of the black revolution. Consider his poem, "Awareness":

BLACK PEOPLE THINK
PEOPLE BLACK PEOPLE
THINK PEOPLE THINK
BLACK PEOPLE THINK—
THINK BLACK.

Or, in another poem, "The New Integrationist": I / seek / integration / of / negroes / with / black / people. Or, in "The Self-Hatred of Don L. Lee," he writes: "I / began / to love / only a / part of / me— / my inner / self which / is all / black— / & / developed a / vehement / hatred of / my light / brown / outer."

It would seem to me that, as this black consciousness grows, as more and more blacks cease being "negroes" and begin to accept and affirm their intrinsic worth as human beings, a new kind of violence might emerge. It remains to be seen whether that violence will be initiated by blacks in a "rage of suicidal madness," or by blacks who have "little or no relationship to reality," or by whites, including white power structures, reacting defensively and aggressively to what they perceive, not as a threat to their person but as a definite threat to their economic and material status, to their enlightened self-interest, and to their completely disabled conception of themself as good, and white, and benign rulers of a racial empire. In regard to the latter, white America reacted more strongly to the Kerner Commission Report with its judgments about white racism than it did to the racial riots which caused the commission to be established. Most of us will not accept the self-knowledge that tells us we are a racist, oppressing nation. Our refusal to accept this reality can eventually disable us.

Should we assume, as well, that the editorial refers to student radicals? Students, too, have been accused of participating in and fomenting violence. Television has brought us "on the scene" reports from campuses where student unions have been burned, where research centers have been bombed, where persons have been killed. These must be the "they" referred to in the editorial. Looking at things, again realistically, one must truthfully admit that acts of violence have occurred on college campuses and have actually been planned and carried out by student militants. Georgie Anne Geyer, a roving foreign correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*, writing in the December 1970 *Progressive*, even outlines a curious relationship between trips by radical students to Cuba and subsequent acts of violence on college campuses. But here again, a twofold aspect to campus violence seems to emerge. For every research center bombed, or every ROTC building burned, there have been overt acts of violence against students. Violence is a two-edged sword, and those who would have us believe that it is only a hasty, poorly thought out, shortsighted strategy employed by students caught up in rages of "suicidal madness" or people who do not have the vision to participate and/or persevere, or people who "live in a distant world," demonstrate, for me at least, possession of a myopic vision of "things as they are."

I believe there is a revolution of consciousness abroad, separate from the black revolution but historically and even structurally related to it, that involves the young—including students and student radicals. Part of that revolution has manifested itself in anti-war demonstrations, student sit-ins and takeovers and strikes, and has involved some physical dimensions of violence. A minor portion of that violence has been actually initiated by the students. A major portion of that violence has resulted from the reactions of police and others to the involvement and participation and perseverance of large numbers of young adults. The question of responsibility, of course, must be borne equally—by all of us. It does little good to attempt to fix blame for tragedies such as those occurring at Kent State.

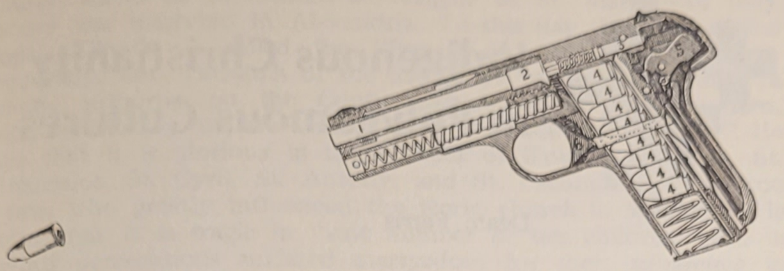
Students marched, bystanders watched (as at Chicago, the whole world watched), and guardsmen shot. All of history is caught up in that tragic event. It is part of a larger, and I believe, worldwide, revolution of consciousness that is in process and is inevitable.

To borrow from the language of the editorial, it is precisely this kind of emerging consciousness, in my opinion, that is creating "new options and alternatives for man . . ." and which puts flesh on divinity and continually manifests the action of God in history.

Janis Joplin sings that "freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose." There are people today throughout the world for whom there is *nothing left to lose*. Some of these people are black, some are students, some are chicano, some are Indian, some are young, some are old. It is pretty easy for those of us who sit in our overstuffed establishment armchairs to fantasize about why those who feel they have "nothing left to lose" should respond in anger, or despair, or with violence.

How soon and how easily we (for those of us who are Americans) seem to forget the violence of our own history. The United States was born in violence. Violence followed the economic and political struggles of our early history. Violence accompanied the pioneer on his trek westward. Violence accompanied our extension to economic and geographic international commitments. Michael Wallace, writing in the Winter 1970-71 *American Scholar* on "The Uses of Violence in American History," suggests why we may have ignored our violent past. He writes that because we perhaps "have been conditioned by the European experience to consider only anti-state violence truly significant, we have been prone to dismiss the American varieties." His implication here is awesome. We have accepted violence between groups and interests. We have accepted violence when the state felt the need for defense or, by extension, the protection of others. It is only when violence is directed toward the state itself that we begin calling it violence. He offers yet another reason for our possible forgetfulness—we have never doubted that "ours was a society in which all groups had the opportunity to advance and prosper peacefully." Thus when violence did appear, we simply dismissed it as an "inexplicable aberration." Wallace's article is extremely helpful, at least it was to me, as a chronicle of violence in three areas of American history—race relations, the violent suppression of blacks by whites; economics, the violent suppression of labor by capital; and ethnic; the suppression of recent immigrant groups by more established ones. His article is important for another reason, as well. By focusing on violence solely in those three areas, the reader is made aware that much history is omitted. At the end of the article, Wallace acknowledges this fact and comments:

> Finally, if it be objected that I have not discussed many other types of purposive violence, I would agree. We are just beginning to probe this area. There are many kinds of domestic violence to be considered: vigilantism, the repression of antiwar groups, political and cultural radicals, and abolitionists; crime; our own war of national liberation; the greatest single incident of purposive violence, the Civil War. I have not discussed our use of violence against other people. . . ."



The relationship between our vehement intolerance of anti-state violence and our acceptance of ignorance of a significantly violent history should helpfully inform this present discussion. Before we so easily "put down" violence, perhaps we should more carefully consider its many facets.

But one other statement in the editorial bears consideration. Brother Muir flatly asserts that those who resort to violence "bring no significant change to mankind." I am not sure what is meant here by "significant" or by "change." But it seems to me that almost every forward thrust in history has involved some corresponding violence. There is something about the human spirit that fossilizes experience into dogma, ritual, and terminal hardness. There is something about the human spirit that ferments, effervesces, expands, and explodes fossilized hardness into new forms and processes. On the one hand creation has been established into specific patterns and forms, but on the other hand creation is in the process of destroying those patterns and forms with newness. There is something of violence here. But birth itself is a violent wrenching.

All of this simply suggests, to me, that a new world is always brought into being "by destroying portions of the current one."

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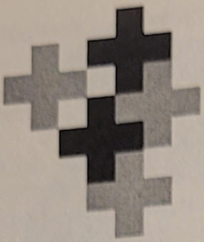

Indigenous Christianity in Polygamous Cultures

Deam Ferris

In the Near East, for nearly two thousand years, Christians have maintained monogamy as an article of faith and law in face of polygamy in the dominant culture.

Courage is to be congratulated for its forum on our recent confrontation with polygamy in the church. It is well that this question be debated with due regard for the complexities that it presents. In one of the articles and in the editorial section great stress was laid upon the concept that our type of Christian culture is now being exposed to other cultures where polygamy is accepted. Perhaps it would not be unfair to paraphrase this point of view to the effect that what we are dealing with is not an essential of the Christian religion but merely an artifact of culture. There was a strong implication in these arguments that tradition and culture are more important than the ordinances, laws, and dogmas of the Christian faith in determining the proper marriage practices of the given culture.

I believe that there is implicit in this point of view the concept that we are now taking Christianity to cultures which have never been exposed to it. It might be well to examine the situation in African and Asian cultures where Christianity and other faiths have coexisted for hundreds of years—in some, from the time of Christ in Judea until now.

With our predominantly European background and especially our concept of the "apostasy" from Roman Catholicism, many of us seem unaware of Christian faiths which have never been under the "yoke of Rome." A very good example of such faiths is the Coptic (Egyptian) Christian Church which has existed in unbroken line from shortly after Pentecost until the present time. For much of this period we have recorded history. Egyptians were mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. The Coptic

Church traces its undocumented origins to St. Mark who they believe was martyred in Alexandria. To this day the head of the Coptic Church is called the "Pope" of Alexandria or more accurately, the "Patriarch of the See of St. Mark." Meinardus,[1] a leading authority on the Coptic Church, ancient and modern, calls the history of the church both "glorious and tragic." He says that it is glorious in the number of illustrious leaders, St. Athanasius, St. Cyril, St. Antony, and St. Pacomius, to mention a few, who greatly influenced the world church in their day. He states that it is tragic in "vast number of her children, who in various persecutions suffered martyrdom for their adherence to the Christian faith."[2]

These persecutions began very early, on the 29th of August, A.D. 284, when Diocletian became emperor. Egyptian Christianity emerged victorious from these persecutions. Its theology and christology were very dynamic and its influence spread throughout the Near East and as far away as Ireland during the next several hundred years. For instance, in Jordan, the ancient city of Jerash has no fewer than thirteen Christian churches among its ruins. It has not been realized that at the time of the Arab conquest of Egypt a generation after Mohammed by Amr ibn al 'As (A.D. 639), Egypt was a Christian nation. This conquest occurred during the time of Benjamin I, the 38th Patriarch of Alexandria. During the years that followed pressures of many kinds came against the Egyptian Christians. Taxation was heavy, their ecclesiastical treasures were confiscated, the church hierarchy were imprisoned and forced to pay for their positions (simony). During the patriarchate of Christodoulos (1047-1078) they were forced to move church headquarters from Alexandria to Cairo. Christianity in Egypt continued to decline as the poorer classes became Muslims, since they could not pay the required poll tax.

From 1279 until the time when Napoleon conquered Egypt, the Mamlukes governed Egypt and were especially severe on the Christians. By the fourteenth century the number of Coptic Christians (Copts) decreased until they represented about one-tenth of the population. The same proportion has been more or less maintained until today.

The Coptic Church is closely associated with the Ethiopian Church, which recognizes the supremacy of the Patriarch of the Egyptian Church. This is also true of many other smaller sects of the Near East including the Armenian Christians.

This history is important in getting perspective on the co-existence of these indigenous Christian faiths with Islam, Judaism, and other religions found in the same regions. It can hardly be considered that this is "Christianity" now confronting an older culture. Judaism, of course, represents an older culture which has existed in the Near East since before the time of Christ. At the time of Mohammed there were several Jewish tribes in the vicinity of Mecca and Medina. Christian missionaries from Egypt, Ethiopia, and other parts of the Near East had been active in Asia and Africa for centuries before Mohammed.

The Coptic Christians and related Christian sects have (like European Christians) rigidly maintained that monogamy is a law of the Christian faith. I use the word "law" advisedly. In the Near East and African countries under the rule of Muslim authorities, the famous "millet" system of the Turks[3] is the law of many countries. This system originated with Mohammed and his armies, who were, for their time, rather benign conquerors. Muslims permitted minorities to live under their own religious laws. Mohammed had Jews judged and punished from the Torah, Christians from their canons, and Muslims from the Qu'ran. The Turks, over many centuries, expanded and encoded the system. Under this system, a Muslim could have four wives at a time (although the Qu'ran rather cleverly extols the ideal of monogamy). Oriental Jews have also been polygamous. In modern Israel, this was a problem with Jews coming from Yemen and other Oriental or African regions; many of these ingathered with more than one wife, which is illegal for the western oriented Jews in Israel.

In the face of a great deal of stress and persecution, both subtle and explicit, these indigenous Christians by the millions have maintained monogamy as a part of church law, not merely custom. Thus, in the Near East, a Christian could be arrested for practicing polygamy by a Muslim officer with four wives; he would be tried under the laws of the church. I have been told by African students that a more recent version of this now happens in African countries (where Muslim missionaries are very active). Here a Christian in polygamy could be arrested by a Muslim policeman with four wives and be tried before a tribal judge with thirty wives.

To summarize, we find in Asia and Africa that Judaism anciently was polygamous and continues to perpetuate the polygamy. Although under attack, especially from educated women, polygamy still continues in Islam and in tribes of Asia and Africa. We note a sharp break with the advent of Christianity in the Near East. For nearly two thousand years, in the face of polygamy in the dominant culture (and in Jewish subcultures) millions of Christians have suffered for their faith. Their theologians and leaders have maintained that monogamy is an article of Christian faith and law. This position was and is accepted by their polygamous rulers and they were and are judged by their own canon law. Against great odds, these indigenous Christians have debated the theological and social parameters of polygamy and monogamy. (While in Egypt I read translations of tracts on this subject.)

I believe the courage and strength of these people is worthy of emulation. They have, unfortunately, been badly treated by the colonial powers and by Western Christians as second-rate Christians. I believe their long experience and courage in dealing with polygamy in their membership while a part of coexisting indigenous cultures practicing polygamy is worthy of consideration at this time. In the light of their continuous existence as viable churches from the time of Christ, we have strong evidence as to the importance placed upon monogamy as a part of canon law from the earliest days of the Christian Church.

1. Meinardus, O. F. A. *Christian Egypt, Ancient and Modern.* Cahiers d'Histoire Egyptienne. Cairo, 1965.
2. *Ibid.*, page 4.
3. Fisher, S. N. *The Middle East, A History.* Alfred A. Knopf, N. Y., 1960.

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Editing the Revelations for Publication

Melvin J. Petersen

To be unwilling to permit a later prophet to edit the works of a former prophet hardly permits God to instruct his people "line upon line and precept upon precept," as the people are able to receive such instruction.

In his recent book, *The Mormon Churches: A Comparison from Within,* Francis W. Holm discussed the problem of editing the revelations published by Joseph Smith and the church which he founded.

The purpose of this brief article is to examine significant ideas concerning the publishing of the revelations which were not considered by Holm. It is the contention of this paper that a consideration of these concepts will significantly alter some of Holm's conclusions.

In explaining the reason some of the revelations were edited, Holm writes, "When it was decided to publish them, it was necessary for him [Joseph Smith] to recall what he had received and to write for publication. When he received copies of what had been produced in the Book of Commandments, he became aware of the need for some revision in many sections."[1]

This explanation is too sketchy to portray an accurate picture. It is true that Joseph Smith, Jr., did record revelations after it was decided that they should be published; but it is also true that he was correcting them prior to their being printed. In a private journal Joseph Smith recorded the following under the date December 1, 1832: "Wrote and corrected revelations."[2] Many revelations had also been written down before the conference of November, 1831. In July of 1830 the prophet wrote that he was arranging and copying the revelations he had received from time to time.[3]

An examination of the recorded events of the conference held in November 1831 reveals that some of the brethren in attendance challenged the language of the revelations. In a revelation, these men were in turn challenged to duplicate one of the least of the commandments lying before them.[4]

In a comparative study of the *Book of Commandments* and editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, it was observed that some editing took place with each edition and that each chapter of the *Book of Commandments* received some editing after publication.[5] These changes were alterations to earlier corrections made as already quoted.

Part of the editing turned out to be revision work, i.e. *Book of Commandments*, Chapter 51, verse 6:

> **And then ye shall begin to be gathered with your families, every man according to his family, according to his circumstances, and as is appointed to him by the *bishop* and *elders* of the Church, according to the laws and commandments, which ye have received, and which ye shall hereafter receive; even so: Amen.**

In the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 64, verse 2, this same passage reads:

> **And then shall ye begin to be gathered with your families, every man according to his family, according to his circumstances, and as is appointed to him by the *presidency* and the *bishop* of the church. . . .**

When the above revelation was first written down, the concept of presidency was unknown in the church, therefore the general term "elder" was used by the prophet.

By 1835 church organization had developed to the extent that when the prophet edited the revelation he used a more accurate title for the responsibility directed in the revelation. Other examples of this type of editing may be noted by comparing *Book of Commandments* 44:29 with 1835 edition 13:10 and *Book of Commandments* 44:54 with 1835 edition 13:19 ("elders" to "high council," "elders" and the "bishop" to "counselors" and the "bishop," "elders" to "high priest").

This type of revision was alarming to David Whitmer who wrote:

> **In the winter of 1834 they saw that some of the revelations in the Book of Commandments had to be changed because the heads of the Church had gone too far, and had done things in which they had already gone ahead of some of the former revelations. So the Book of *Doctrine and Covenants* was printed in 1835, and some of the revelations changed and added.[6]**

It is extremely important that one recognizes a fundamental concept which God had revealed in the *Book of Mormon*. "For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have."[7]

In 1831 the Lord revealed a preface to the revelations wherein He stated: "Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my preface unto the book of my commandments, which I have given them *to publish unto you*, O inhabitants of the earth."[8]

It is clearly indicated that the revelations being published were to be worldwide in circulation. This certainly would place the prophet and the church under the responsibility of selecting that which should go to the world. That some of the revelations should not be published until church practice would help prepare the world to receive them is reasonable and coincides with what was done by the prophet and the church in preparing and publishing revelations for the world.

One of Holm's most serious criticisms of the 1876 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* as published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was that so many years lapsed after the death of Joseph Smith before a number of sections were published under serious challenge.

It is of interest to note that of the sections found in the 1876 edition of the Mormon *Doctrine and Covenants* which are not included in the Reorganized Church edition, ten are published in the Reorganized Church history in full and two are published in part in said history.[9] Also three sections—121, 122, and 123—comprise parts of a letter written by Joseph Smith from Liberty Jail which was published in the *Times and Seasons.*[10]

Some concern is indicated by Holm as he compares the prophet's letter as it was published in the *Times and Seasons* and those excerpts now found in the Mormon *Doctrine and Covenants*. He asks, "Does a later prophet have the right to alter, or add to, that which was previously given by another prophet?"[11]

A point of consideration regarding Holm's question may be observed in the manner Joseph Smith revised the Bible. He often revised his own revisions. President Brigham Young stated that the prophet, before his death, had spoken to him about going through the translation of the scriptures again and perfecting it upon points of doctrine which the Lord had restrained him from giving in plainness and fullness at the time of which we write (February 2, 1833).[12]

It seems logical that living prophets would add to that given by dead prophets as the people become prepared to receive additional light. The ninth Article of Faith specifies that we will receive more than we currently possess.

A comparison of the prophet's letter as published in the *Times and Seasons* with sections 121, 122, and 123 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* (LDS) reveals that most of the deleted material dealt with problems between the Saints and people in the state of Missouri. As to the material printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants* (LDS), it was edited very similarly to other revelations dictated by the prophet. A letter written to the church displaying strong feelings concerning those who were oppressing the church would contain material that would not be suitable to be published to the world.

A statement from Richard P. Howard, Historian of the Reorganized Church, is apropos regarding this concept. He writes: "In a similar frame of mind, Joseph Smith sought to convey in wiser, more restrained language the essence of the ideas which he had earlier written regarding the promises of the Lord to the faithful who respond to the gospel message."[13]

Howard then quotes from the *Book of Commandments*, Chapter 4, verses 4-6, and compares those verses with the 1835 *Doctrine and Covenants*, Section 32, verse 3. In explaining why the prophet deleted so much from the first writing he comments:

> However, in 1834-35, facing up to the cruel realities of the situation through which the church had so recently passed, Joseph Smith stated essentially the same kind of judgment and promise but in more general and less vindictive language than he had used previously. Here one can see the recurring principle of inspirational encounter within the context of history—in the midst of events which themselves were helping to shape the future as he anticipated it and the past as he reflected on it.[14]

The same simple rules were applied to the prophet's letter as were applied by the prophet himself to earlier revelations. His freedom to delete is seen in chapter four of the *Book of Commandments* where all of verse five and most of verse six were deleted.

Again he felt free at times to amplify that which he had written earlier as Holm observes.[15] In fact, Holm himself asks who is to question the right of a prophet to interpret what he received.[16] Holm is not willing to permit a latter prophet, however, to edit the works of a former prophet.[17] This restriction of the latter prophet hardly permits God to instruct his people "line upon line and precept upon precept."[18] In spite of Holm's refusal to permit such action it was taken by Joseph Smith and also by those who followed him in preparing the revelations for publication.

Holm attributes Joseph Smith with the practice of never hesitating to make public the will of God as it was revealed to him by the Spirit, an example that should be a guiding influence to those who succeeded him.[19] Such a statement has severe limitation if Holm is implying that Joseph Smith revealed all he knew to the church. A more accurate statement would point out that he revealed all he could to the church, the limiting factor being the church's inability to accept more. Brigham Young reports that Joseph Smith said to him in Kirtland, "Brother Brigham, if I was to reveal to this people what the Lord has revealed to me, there is not a man or a woman would stay with me."[20]

In 1863, an edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* was put out by the Reorganized Church (referred to as an 1864 edition but actually sold in the fall of 1863). Isaac Sheen arranged this publication and as Richard P. Howard writes, ". . . the Doctrine and Covenants generally in use at that time by RLDS leaders was one of the Nauvoo editions. . . . Realizing this helps us today to understand why Isaac Sheen, in arranging for the production of the first RLDS edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in 1863, would have used one of the Nauvoo editions in determining the content of that first RLDS edition."[21]

As Howard points out, Sheen reproduced every document contained in the Nauvoo editions plus two new documents previously printed in the *Times and Seasons*. He assigned number 22 and 36 to them. These two sections contained part of Joseph Smith's revision of the Bible, and near the turn of the century there were three formats with some variations of text: *Doctrine and Covenants*, the *Inspired Version*, and *Church History*.[22] The 1867 edition of the Holy Scriptures became the standard format and all writings were edited to agree with that source.[23]

Sheen's method of publishing revelations to be accepted and used by the Reorganized Church was to prove difficult in the years to come. Three sections in the Nauvoo edition considered baptism for the dead. Howard describes this problem as follows:

> In recent years a number of RLDS leaders and members have questioned the continuance in the Doctrine and Covenants of these three documents supporting baptism for the dead. These questions have come not only on the grounds of doctrinal soundness but also because since the beginning of the Reorganization none of its presidents has spoken for the church officially either to renounce or to endorse the doctrine in principle—or even to commit the church to a definite disposition of this doctrine in the event of instruction to build a temple.
>
> RLDS Conferences have acted and leaders have written to defend the doctrine in principle. However, they have faulted the practice of it because of lack of spiritual support for it, calling it "inessential to salvation," a "local, permissive" rite, limited in the past to the Nauvoo Temple and in the future to a temple in Zion, in her stakes, or in Jerusalem, and only then by specific commandment of God.[24]

It doesn't take any imagination to recognize that the objectives of the Reorganized Church were not those of the Nauvoo church in all details and, therefore, adopting verbatim the *Doctrine and Covenants* of the Nauvoo period has caused some difficulty.

It is of interest to note that the Nauvoo edition, containing 111 sections, included 91 sections of revelations and instructions given to Joseph Smith between the years 1829-1833. In the years to follow, sections were recorded as follows: 1834—5; 1835—4; 1836—1; 1837—1; 1838—1; 1839—0; 1840—0; 1841—1; 1842—2; 1843—0; 1844—1. It is easy to observe that Joseph Smith was a restorer, with the bulk of his recorded revelations coming within a few years then a tapering to revelations as they were needed.

John A. Widtsoe has written of this concept:

> There is, in view of what has been said, need of continuous revelation. However, we must understand that here are two classes of revelation given by God to man. The first deals with the structure and content of the plan of salvation. Once given it does not need to be given again. Adam received it. . . . Christ gave the same revelation to man, in His dispensation. So did Joseph Smith in his dispensation. The foundation, or platform once given, does not need to be given again unless men forget the truth.
>
> Then there are revelations that fit the changes in our lives, meet our new needs, help us overcome unforseen conditions—revelations for our daily guidance.
>
> This great country, the United States of America, has found itself in a great depression. We have the Gospel. What did the Lord do? He spoke to His Prophet, and we have what is known as the Welfare Program. It is the application of the eternal principles of the Gospel to present day needs. It is as revelations. We have that type of revelation continuously.

> So when people say: "We ought to have revelation now as we did in the day of Joseph Smith," we must answer, "Open your eyes; we do have revelation every day: such as we need from day to day."
>
> Revelations have been given to Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith and Heber J. Grant. Every one of them has had revelation whereby the Church has been guided. The Lord does not need to come in person and stand before His prophets to talk with them. We have no record of such manifestations except in the opening dispensations.[25]

Revelation is given to direct the church, not confuse those seeking to carry out the Lord's purposes. Nephi wrote, ". . . for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have."[26] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has diligently sought to comply with the revelations God revealed to the prophet Joseph Smith. The building of temples is a very vital part of the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and as these buildings have been erected, greater understanding of their purposes and uses has been revealed. Ordinances within the temples, reserved only for those who prepare for them, are not openly published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the world. The revelations to be given to the world are written and published, with the invitation that living prophets are directing the Lord's work and if any wish to know more concerning the purposes of the Lord, they can obey the revelations and turn to his living oracles for further instruction.

Holm challenges the right of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to build temples and perform ordinances within these buildings. That Joseph Smith received revelations commanding the church to build temples is easily verified.[27] Nephi's comment that refusal to comply with a commandment would bring a loss of understanding regarding that commandment might well be considered at this time regarding the attitude of the LDS Church and the RLDS Church concerning temple work; one church built temples and as a result has found all early revelations concerning temples and temple work to be relevant and important—the other church did not build temples and has but recently reorganized its *Doctrine and Covenants* so as to designate some revelations as historical and thus relegate them to a past period of church history, no longer applicable to church objectives.

A serious omission in Holm's book is his neglect to treat the lost years 1844-1863, and how those years would affect the selection of revelations to be published to the world. A study of the various editions of the *Doctrine and Covenants* will disclose that not all revelations were published at the time they were given to Joseph Smith. The LDS Church continued its existence, teaching and practicing the revelations that had been revealed until those revelations could be published for all people to see and read. The 1876 edition added to the Mormon *Doctrine and Covenants* what that church had been using for a number of years. When those revelations were published the church had experience and practice to verify their importance to the world. The RLDS, however, had not been in existence from the prophet's death until its organization in 1860. In deciding which of the latter-day revelations should be used, a long look back to the edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* in existence during the year the prophet was martyred brought that edition into church use. Today many of those sections have proved troublesome and as a result the recent change of policy previously mentioned. Had the Reorganized Church been in existence from the time of the martyrdom, what effect might that have had upon the revelations selected for church use? Holm says nothing about the time gap.

Holm's claims of membership in both organizations cannot be denied. The fact, however, that he left the LDS Church at an early age, and that his participation within that church was limited, his being ordained a deacon, but receiving no further advancement in the priesthood, would seriously challenge his competency to speak for that organization. His stated knowledge of the LDS Church reflects itself as being acquired after he became a strong advocate for the Reorganized Church and therefore his ability to be objective is limited as sensitive areas are discussed.

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1. Francis W. Holm, Sr., *The Mormon Churches: A Comparison from Within* (Kansas City, Missouri: Midwest Press, 1970), p. 98.

2. "Far West Record," located in the LDS Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

3. Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church* (2nd ed.; Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1953), I, 104.

4. *Doctrine and Covenants* (LDS) 67:4-8.

5. Melvin J. Petersen, *A Study of the Nature of and the Significance of the Changes in the Revelations as Found in A Comparison of the Book of Commandments and Subsequent Editions of the Doctrine and Covenants* (unpublished Master's thesis, Brigham Young University), 1955.

6. David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, Missouri: David Whitmer, 1887), p. 69.

7. *Book of Mormon* (LDS), II Nephi 28:30.

8. *Doctrine and Covenants* (LDS), 1:6 (emphasis added).

9. Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, Missouri: Herald Publishing House, 1969), p. 23.

10. *Times and Seasons*. Vol. 1, No. 7, May 1840, pp. 99-104, and Vol. 1, No. 9, July 1840, pp. 131-134.

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20. *Journal of Discourses*, IX, 294.

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23. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 227.

25. T. Edgar Lyon, *Introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News Press, 1948) p. 41.

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27. *Doctrine and Covenants* (1844 edition), Sections 4, 7, 76, 103.

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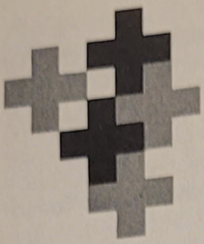

In Search of the Phoenix

N. James Weate, Jr.

The Phoenix which we should seek today is that spirit which disavows the ability to find absolutes.

Indian legend conveys the idea that dead ashes of a people have no potency or constructive use. But from the *smoke* of that which is burned there arises a Phoenix or the true spirit or true meaning which does have power to enter into men's beings and change them. In like manner, we need to make sure we do not worship the dead ashes but instead search for the Phoenix. The following ideas are some of the ones which may represent the Phoenix which mankind should now be finding if we are to continue in our search for meaning in religion.

Attitude Toward Conformity

The Pharisees of Jesus' day were highly in favor of a strict conformity. Perhaps more than any other attitude which the Pharisees portrayed was the one which stressed following the letter of the law as it was then being interpreted. They believed in a body of absolute knowledge and they thought they had access to these absolutes. Jesus was a nonconformist of his age; he questioned that the people of his times had the final answers.

The Phoenix which we should seek today is that spirit which disavows the ability of man to find absolutes. This means that we must be forever cautious in entertaining those individuals or groups who promise to give us "the law," since their interpretations will invariably lead us to an absolute body of doctrine or practices. The acceptance of these absolute beliefs rules out the opportunities of experimentation which have been part of mankind's religious quest. Moreover, stress upon beliefs has the detrimental effect of causing people to focus upon the law to the neglect of love.

Dictatorial organizations promote the uncritical transmission of an official belief structure or ideology; a democratic organization relies upon the people being involved in the intelligent interpreting of the cultural heritage to present-day living. The very emphasis in Western life and religion upon the dignity and worth of the individual should cause us to seek a democratically oriented approach to life. The Phoenix we must be after will be one that is democratic and accepting rather than legalistic and conforming.

Concepts About the Creator and Revelation

It is quite possible that there is a rationality or order to the universe that man, in his greatest moments, becomes attuned to understand. Thus, at the outset, the writer wishes to make quite clear that he has a firm and profound belief in a Creative Force that he considers to be the Originator of the universe. The writer hesitates to use the word "God" to designate such a Being since that word automatically summons up so many preconceptions that the writer does not intend to present to the mind of the reader.

While we need not deny the possibility of ESP, revelation, or mysticism, it would be advantageous to reconsider our interpretations of these experiences. Who among us has seen the Creator of the universe either during this life or in that enormity of time that preceded this life? A few claim they did, but that is doubtful. It is more probable that a Being as infinite and vast as the One we call God cannot be known or fathomed or viewed by such as we. Our knowledge of Him is probably limited to our sensing of the order and rationality of the universe—a universality of being that we can all comprehend in part.

The universality of being that can be sensed by all has been felt by people of all walks of life—chemists, poets, athletes, businessmen, politicians, herdsmen, educators—as they have contemplated their relationship to the universe. Far from being limited to the religious leader about religious matters, it penetrates every phase of life. As these people have sensed the universality of being that is present around them, they have given their interpretation of the Creator rather than the Creator giving them His interpretation of Himself.

The Phoenix for which we should seek is the spirit which says that man interprets God through sensing God's creativity in the universe, not through a direct apprehension; man senses God through the order and rationality of the universe, just as a hunter senses deer by seeing the hoofprint of a doe in the newly fallen snow. We must not wait for another man to say he has heard God's words when the same knowledge can come to all of us regardless of our occupation. The knowledge which will come will be the meaning for daily living which the individual constructs. It cannot be the thoughts of the Almighty as He muses over religious questions in man-like language patterns. Such a Phoenix calls for greater accountability of every man than man has ever before been willing to assume or recognize. Buck-passing becomes impossible.

Concepts About the Church

The church must be viewed as a dynamic functioning of purposeful individuals. Only in this sense can religion change the world. Moreover, only through living lives that exemplify unity with fellowman can we become one in spirit.

The concept of a church built upon beliefs is static. That organization or those people who stress beliefs will ultimately end up judging righteousness by beliefs and not by works. The result will be the elimination of constructive or regenerative elements because these elements do not fit into the belief structure which has been created.

The Phoenix of the church must be one which views the true church as people with the right practices. Apostasy would consist of failure to live one's religion rather than departure from a belief structure. The ultimate in restoration would be the engendering of brotherly love which is the essence of true religion.

Attitude Toward Hierarchical Control

The view that the prophet should be the president of the church, as is found in RLDS organization, presents a built-in conflict. The Hebrews had high priests who ruled over the temple with other men called prophets who served as ecclesiastical watchdogs over the priests. Such division of responsibility between the administrative and prophetic offices would have eliminated the embarrassing situation of the 1968 World Conference when the Bishopric was called into question by the same personality with whom they had had contention. The separation of the two offices of prophet and president would have allowed an impartial third party to exercise judgment.

The Phoenix to be sought after is the creation of a chief administrator of the church who is open to a freely functioning church populace. The substitution of a presbyterian or congregational framework for the present episcopal structure would be one facet of the needed change. The separation of the offices of prophet and president so that the president could be viewed in a more fallible frame of reference would be the second facet. The democratic spirit of our times indicates the need for such reformulation.

Attitude Toward Finances

National, state, and local taxation plans in the United States have undergone drastic revision down through the years. A complete reassessment is currently being called for again in order to achieve equity.

It may be wise for the RLDS Bishopric to review the contribution plan of the church. The writer would suggest that all contributions to the church—local or world church—be considered tithing. It may even be a strategic move for a certain portion of a person's contributions to other charitable organizations to be counted as tithing. The Phoenix, in this case, would be the recognition that brotherly love reaches beyond denominational lines.

Concept About Scriptures

We need to look for a Phoenix in the RLDS approach to scripture. Just as the Bible is not a collection of prophetic messages concerning priesthood calls to various offices or messages to a corporate body, perhaps we would be best today not following such a format so precisely. Perhaps the incorporation of hymns, history, great writings and sermons, and world events would create a better scriptural record for succeeding generations. The greatest portions of the Bible are its poetry, history, proverbs, and biographical literature. The real essence of scriptures is that they provide succeeding generations with the interpretation of God that preceding generations have formulated. The richness of man's interpretations are not found in semi-legal documents but in literary expressions of various types. It is the variety of expression that the Bible contains that gives it the greatness of its religious value. We should search for a Phoenix of no less import.

Summary

Mankind has forever been engaged in a search for the Phoenix or the true meaning of religion. Reinterpretations do not lead always to a worsened state but have frequently resulted in greater light and truth. With such a hope in mind, the writer urges the RLDS Church populace to engage in the search for the Phoenix. Rather than follow a form which was created in a bygone age, we must seek for the true spirit so that we might create new forms for a new age.

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REVIEWS

The Reminiscences and Civil War Letters of Levi Lamoni Wight. *Edited by Davis Bitton. (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1970, 191 pages, $7.00.) Notes, illustrations, in collectors binding. Published as Volume Four of the University of Utah Publications in the American West.*

The cantankerous, strong-willed Lyman Wight was ordained a member of the Council of Twelve in 1841 during the high days of the Mormon church. Following the death of the Prophet in June of 1844, Lyman Wight broke with the clashing personality of Brigham Young and led a small but determined company of followers across the Red River into Texas. He held this group together through a series of crises and moves that ranged from the 1845 Zodiac colony near Austin to Hamilton Creek and Mountain Valley, Texas. Though eventually stripped of every official "Mormon authority" in 1848, Wight was able to serve as the spiritual and political leader of his religious band until his death in 1858.

It was to Zodiac, the "rapturous picture of luxuriant nature," that he took his family which included the ten-year-old Levi Lamoni Wight. Levi was the fifth child (Orange, Anna, Rosina, and Lehi preceded him and Loammi followed) of this ultra-religious family. Levi's early years in the Colony were mixed with adventure and the clash of the strong, independent young man and the domineering father. Levi was nearly 22 when his father died of an opium coma (pages 19 and 85) and the Colony, without strong leadership, broke up. Looking for some means of support, Levi rented a small land area and entered the livestock business with his young wife, Sophia. He was nearly 26 when he felt the call of his country and joined the Confederate Army to serve during the Civil War. His duties led him into battle, through the long, dull periods of waiting, and convalescence.

On his return from service he worked at a lumber gin and the hardware firm of Firebugh & Co. in Texas. It was here in 1888 that he came in contact with the church and was baptized into the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He was ordained an elder in July of that year. At this time he took "to the ministry and went to preaching, about the hardest job I had ever struck except the four years war and the two months in Foxe's mill" (p. 52). Soon "it fell to my lot so decided by Genl. Conference to travel and preach the Gospel" (p. 53) during which he spent several years in the Southwest. The financial condition of the church was such that much of Levi's time was spent in the collection of funds to continue his work and he worked as carpenter, builder, and handyman. The church's improved condition and the advancing age of Levi caused him to ease his manual labor and full-time "preaching." In 1902 his wife, Sophia, died of "acute indigestion"—an experience which he relates: "At 8 p.m. her body was out of pain, her spirit out of prison . . . to be reconciled to my loss in her I never can or will be, but to her gain I am reconciled for I know she is with God" (pp. 58-59). Levi passed the last years of his life moving between his children and relatives and finally died in San Antonio, Texas, in May 1918.

This book is a brief record of the life of Levi Lamoni Wight written by his hand probably between 1902 and 1917. The second part of the work is a collection of letters between Levi and his wife Sophia during their period of separation caused by the Civil War.

If the reader is looking for some sort of continuous story of the early days of the Wight Colony, the American Southwest, or the Civil War, then he will be disappointed. For this brief work is not this at all. It is, instead, a remarkable and delightful mood piece in which the memories of what it takes to be a man are remembered by a man. In some places, the writing is brief and sketchy to match the aged memory; in other places, it is vivid and alive as those events stood still fresh in his mind; in others, they are angry as he remembers the waste of lives and dreams; in others, they are beautifully simple.

The fierce character of his father seems to have been mellowed in the son, yet the deep sensitivities of the older Wight are even more obvious in the younger man. Speaking of the death of his wife's sister on the voyage from Liverpool: "In the voige one of her little sisters was taken from the famely by death and was beried beneth the briney ocean. Sad indeed, the berial place of the little one could not be marked onley could be remembered as the broad bosom of the mighty ocean, heaveng its angre waves over the little cofin . . ." (p. 11).

He writes of the war: "From Alexander to the Atachefaliah for a good many days we faught allmos night and day . . . the heavest cannon of the whole campain took plase on the Menchaly praire—4 miles from Marksville . . . we had a hot fight. . . . Here the last battle of the 78 days campain was faught and it was a bloody one and the campain was virtuly at an end" (p. 34).

On his fear of death: "The words my Dear wife is perfictly tru for all tho I go to the ends of the earth (unles death over takes me) I shal return to my familey, and in case of death we have one feeling of satisfaction and that is a fulconfidence of meeting each other beyond that dredful monster were our hapiness will make us to for get this world of trouble" (p. 115).

On his country: "We cannot submit to the tyranicle powers of the north. No, Death is preferable. Their fore I shal stick to it to the end, . . . no my name shal never go down to posterity as being the first one of that name that ever plaid the cowered, or srunk from that witch becomes the deuty of every one that loves his Country" (p. 175).

There is one other account of the life of Levi Lamoni Wight, an "autobiography" of sorts published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the *Journal of History* in 1916. This small book is also autobiographical but there are numerous places where the accounts do not agree or where, more often, they are exclusive of one another. *The Reminiscences and Civil War Letters of Levi Lamoni Wight* is by far the better account probably because the editor, Davis Bitton of the University of Utah, has done such an excellent job. Rarely is the flavor of Wight's work hampered and this, plus some excellent notes, is a tribute to both the unspoiled reminiscences and the honest editing.

It is necessary in these times to remember that the men and women of history were our colleagues in life and that they felt and dreamed and experienced heartaches and joy. This brief journey into the mind and heart of a man, Levi Wight, is a rewarding adventure in the experiences of man.

Paul M. Edwards

Culture and Commitment. *By Margaret Mead. (Garden City, New York: 1969, Doubleday & Co., 113 pp., $5.00.)*
The Greening of America. *By Charles A. Reich. (New York: 1970, Random House, 399 pp., $7.95.)*
Future Shock. *By Alvin Toffler. (New York: 1970, Random House, 432 pp., $8.95.)*

If there is any, and I mean *any*, truth to Margaret Mead's "post-figurative" cultural model, or Charles Reich's "Consciousness III," or Alvin Toffler's "Ad-hoc-racy" then the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, or any "church" for that matter, is in serious trouble.

Mead, in *Culture and Commitment,* suggests a threefold model of cultural analysis and interpretation. In the "post-figurative" culture, children learn from their forebears—patterns of tradition, law, and authority are well established and accepted. In the "co-figurative," both children and adults learn from their peers—authority becomes situational and contemporary rather than absolute and traditional. Finally, in the "pre-figurative," adults begin to learn from their children as well—learning takes on an "anticipatory" dimension.

Mead suggests that present society, which she envisions as a "world community," is generally located in the "co-figurative" stage, and is rapidly approaching the "pre-figurative" stage. She refers to today's younger generation, those twenty-five and under, as the native inhabitants of a "pre-figurative" culture. The rest of us, particularly those in the preceding generation, are seen as immigrants in time. While we have a foot in the old culture, and are taking steps forward into the new, our children are totally oriented to the new. Like the Old World immigrants to the new America, we must learn the language from our children.

Reich, in the *Greening of America,* echoes Miss Mead in some interesting parallels. His book is divided into two main sections, "The Corporate State" and "The New Consciousness." The Corporate State is the powerful amalgamation and integration of the government sector with the private sector so that a monolithic superstructure is seen to emerge. He writes, "Once we realize that what is public and what is private have been merged, we can discern the real monolith of power, and see that there is nothing at all within the system to impose checks and balances, to offer competition, to raise even a voice of caution or doubt." He summarizes his worst fears for the corporate state thusly: "It is the worst of all possible worlds: uncontrolled technology and uncontrolled profiteering combined into a force that is both immensely powerful and utterly irresponsible."

With this as backdrop, Reich suggests that the "machine has begun to destroy itself." To discuss this point, he attempts to classify three broad types of consciousness that predominate in America. He says, "Consciousness I is the traditional outlook of the American farmer, small businessman, or worker trying to get ahead. . . . Consciousness II represents the values of an organizational society." He suggests that this consciousness, "dominated by the machine-like rationality of the corporate state, has proved utterly unable to manage, guide, or control the immense apparatus of technology and organization America has built." He further suggests that "faced with this threat to their very existence, the inhabitants of America have begun, as a matter of urgent biological necessity, to develop a new consciousness, appropriate to today's realities and therefore capable of mastering the apparatus of power and bringing it under human control." He sees this consciousness, "Consciousness III," as spreading rapidly among wider and wider segments of youth. (All quotations from Reich are taken from the *New Yorker* condensation of the book, September 26, 1970, which is infinitely more readable than the book.)

More specifically, Reich defines his notion of consciousness as "a total configuration in any given individual, making up his whole perception of reality." In Consciousness I, a new nation promised a new way of life. Each individual was a free man. He worked for himself, not society, and he built a personal empire. Consciousness II reflected an emerging social consciousness, as crystallized in the "New Deal." Previously man sacrificed for his personal good. Now, in Consciousness II, it seemed more important to sacrifice for the common good. But his consciousness, seemingly optimistic, is predicated on a profoundly pessimistic view of man. There is a need for law and order to regulate this negative aspect of man. In Consciousness II, organizations and bureaucracies become necessary to "deal with the doubtful and deficient raw material that is 'human Nature.' " The corporate state, outlined in the first half of his book, is the natural product of the Consciousness II mentality.

Consciousness III, as Reich sees it, has been borne out of two interacting forces: "the promise of life that is made to young Americans by all of our affluence, technology, liberation, and ideals, and the threat to that promise posed by everything from neon ugliness to boring jobs to the Vietnam war and the shadow of nuclear holocaust."

Reich feels that this new consciousness will inevitably force society to change and more responsibly deal with negative fallout from the rampant corporate state. He states that what Consciousness III sees, "with a clarity that no ideology could provide," is (1) a society that is unjust to its poor and its minorities, (2) is run for the benefit of a privileged few, (3) lacks its proclaimed democracy and liberty, (4) is ugly and artificial, (5) destroys the environment and the self, and (6) is, like the war it spawns and perpetuates, "unhealthy for children and other living things."

Reich illustrates the difference between a II and III person by discussing the "concept of full personal responsibility." In Con II, commitment to society means "commitment to reform in the general direction already established." This kind of person fights his battle *from* a position of comfort and security. The Con III man, however, "does not assume he can fight society while luxuriating in its benefits." For Con III, this battle is personal as well. He looks at himself, evaluates his relationship to the causes of injustice, and attempts to effect a change in life-style commensurate with his feeling of responsibility to change. In Reich's words, "the liberal can be detached, cool, intellectual, cynical; he fights with his head. Consciousness III is more apt to feel visceral outrage at the ugliness of a freeway or the misery of a slum."

It is, to be sure, an oversimplification to equate Mead's post-, co-, and pre-figurative cultural models with the three consciousnesses here outlined. Both, however, suggest an evolution of moral and intellectual awareness from a static legal-traditional view of society to a dynamic rational-process view of society. Both suggest that coping with the present is intrinsically related to the ability to understand and anticipate the future.

Interestingly enough, this is precisely the point of Toffler's book *Future Shock*. His thesis is that technology is engulfing man with such rapid change, change that bombards man from seemingly infinite points, that man is unable to cope with it. Change is so accelerated that tomorrow is more than just another day; tomorrow brings a completely new culture. Each of us, then, is constantly an immigrant in a new culture; each of us is confronted with a new kind of cultural shock. He asks us to imagine an "entire generation—including its weakest, least intelligent, and most irrational members—suddenly transported into this new world. The result is mass disorientation, future shock on a grand scale." The point of Toffler's book, however, is not just to prove his future shock thesis but to suggest a method for dealing with future shock—a way of adapting to the ever emerging culture. To put it simply Toffler suggests that we must cope with the future culture by anticipating it. He suggests that we turn education around. "To help avert future shock," he writes, "we must create a super-industrial education system. And to do this, we must search for our objectives and methods in the future, rather than the past."

As indicated at the outset, each of these theoretical approaches to understanding our present cultural situation, if they have any validity at all, hold tremendous implications for all contemporary institutions, the church included. The bureaucratic institution, most will agree, is an unfortunate necessity in a highly technological and organized society. But Toffler foresees the development of a new kind of institutional structure—the "ad-hocracy." He writes:

> We are, in fact, witnessing the arrival of a new organizational system that will increasingly challenge, and ultimately supplant bureaucracy. This is the organization of the future. I call it "Ad-hocracy."
>
> Man will encounter plenty of difficulty in adapting to this new style organization. But instead of being trapped in some unchanging, personality-smashing niche, man will find himself liberated, a stranger in a new free-form world of kinetic organizations. In this alien landscape, his position will be constantly changing, fluid, and varied. And his organizational ties, like his ties with things, places and people, will turn over at a frenetic and ever-accelerating rate.

Had such a series of books emerged in 1830 I am sure that Joseph Smith would have sounded his "Right On!" or "Amen!" His task, at least part of it, was that of pointing out the inadequacy of the existing institutional structures. As a result, the early church was very ad-hoc in its approach to institutional organization. By and large, structures were developed relating to specific needs, assignments were made accordingly, and when the need for the structures was gone, the structures were abandoned for new forms. When there was need to build a temple, structures were developed to facilitate the process. When there was a need for a militia, then a militia was developed. The early church was structurally dynamic and flexible enough to change when needed.

But these books have appeared in 1970-71. The church today is structurally static. Forms and structures which came into being because of the dynamic interaction of a prophet with God and the people have become virtually embedded in our institutional framework. The midweek prayer meeting or even the Sunday morning church school-preaching services are prime examples. It is not only that we have such prayer services and preaching services in a fairly rigid pattern, but also that the internal structure of such services is rather universally fixed.

The prophetic thrust of these three books is diametrically opposed to the kind of established congregational forms and bureaucratic institutional structures which direct the affairs of today's church. This is not to say that these forms and structures are ineffective. Their effectiveness or ineffectiveness is largely beside the point. The thrust of these kinds of secular prophecy is directed toward potential and possibility. The present is undergoing such rapid and dynamic change that the institutions of the future are going to need to have some built-in systems to allow for change. History suggests to us that, from the Christian perspective at least, the Hebrew tradition did not have a built-in adaptability that enabled it to discern the validity of Jesus. Similarly, the Roman Catholic Church, at least up to the present time, was largely unresponsive to Martin Luther. In large measure, established institutions, even those which lay claim on some divine sanction, have demonstrated an inability to adapt when change demanded that adaptation and development were needed.

The present church is now presented with the problem of discerning whether this is one of those points in history when there is a need for change and adaptability as opposed to a need for the status quo and consistency. The cultural analysis of Mead, Reich, and Toffler must be carefully assessed. Specifically, the following kinds of questions must be adequately faced and dealt with.

If Margaret Mead is accurately reading our cultural situation, then how are we "old world" immigrants relating to the "new world" natives? How are we learning from youth? Is this an "incidental" kind of learning or are we "structuring-in" ways to hear and appreciate the insights of the young?

What kinds of insights do the young possess? Mead and Reich, for example, give similar examples. Our generation has found it convenient to employ multiple meanings and uses for words like murder and violence. For the young, however, there is little moral difference between the kind of collective killing which we legally call homicide—John was murdered by Pete means John was killed by Pete—and the kind of collective killing which we legally call war—a patrol of Americans killed 15 Viet Cong. Killing is killing, the young insist, and no amount of verbalization and interpretation can change the grim reality.

Reich's arguments about the corporate state could well be applied to the church. In what ways is the church a monolithic super-bureaucracy that plays down local initiative in favor of some amalgamated central thrust? The church has talked about decentralization for several years now, but it does not take a "new world" consciousness to observe that the basic power of the church is still clustered in Independence. Economically speaking, of course, the control of funds is centered in the Presiding Bishopric's wing of the Auditorium. The construction of church buildings, for example, must pass approval of the bishops. This is not only necessary because of the control of funding, but the bishops feel that they have some particular insights into the kinds of structure that best serve the interests of the church. Politically speaking, of course, the distribution of manpower in terms of appointee and departmental personnel is 100 percent centrally located.

The church will be really decentralized when regions and stakes keep most of their financial resources—sending a much smaller portion to the world church—and when final decisions about buildings, the hiring of ministerial personnel, and the development of autonomous enablement resources are made by personnel in those regions and stakes.

The emergence of Consciousness III, though, according to Reich, is inevitable. If this is true, then, and as it comes into prominence, old structures will necessarily tumble in favor of new structures such as those suggested by Toffler's Ad-hocracy. How then can a religious organization tied to structures that inhere in assumptions of divine guidance and direction significantly adapt without destroying those sacred assumptions? To put it another way, can the church remain consistent with its past and present perceptions of its role and structure and still adopt the "kinetic" nature which Toffler feels is so necessary?

These kinds of concerns call up the central problem mentioned earlier. Is this one of those points in history in which there is a need for the future to take shape as a *radical discontinuity* from the past? In the short view, new movements, consciousnesses, even new churches are seen as radical departures, even aberrations, from the past. To the traditional Jewish family, the new Christians were seen as anything but an emerging continuity within the ancient framework of the law. They were seen in radical discontinuity with those traditions. Jesus was assassinated. Christians were persecuted. But to the Christians, especially the latter-day variety, the new movement was seen not only in continuity with the past but as fulfillment of the promises of the past. In the larger view, such new movements are often seen as actual continuations of the tradition.

Similarly, the majority of the citizens in such places as Kirtland, Independence, Western Missouri, and Illinois saw the early saints as existing in radical discontinuity from the Christian tradition. Today, as then, the saints see themselves not so much as an emerging and radical discontinuity with Christendom but as part of the process of fulfillment of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The gift of discernment takes on special significance in the context of such a discussion. The church has some hard decisions to make about its future. There may be a need for the church, or some revolutionary form of the church (perhaps most of us would not even call it the church) to be seen in a seeming "radical discontinuity" with its past. Future historians may refer to the Meads, Reichs and Tofflers as secular Jeremiahs, Isaiahs, or Amoses and the responsive church as the remnant of the Lord "rightly dividing the word of truth." Of course, these writers may be seen as "false prophets" and we, if we listen to them, could well be seen as idealistic and shortsighted opportunists.

A possible insight, however, into our response to such a crucial question involves our understanding of the church. "What is the Church?" Is the church primarily a form, a structure, an organization? Or is the church primarily a dynamic response? Or is it both? Is there a difference?

Some have argued that the church is an inherent structure that is specifically an integral part of "the" divine plan. As such it is fixed and infinite. God, in this view, presides over an orderly universe and watches it unfold according to plan. Christ is the junior member of the architectural firm who took on the added responsibility of laying out the plan to the people—most of whom, by the way, didn't seem to like it. The church, made up of those people who believe and understand God's plan, is a precast structure which provides an organizational context from which to gain strength, sustenance, and within which to encounter God.

Another view suggests that the church is simply the people of God—those persons who have seen the action of God in history and who have responded by professing a commitment to participate with God in that action. In response, they gather to confess their human frailty, to witness to the Word (the acts of God), and they scatter to intercede in action in the world on behalf of God. In this view, form and structure are not immutably inherent but are contextual and dynamic. *It is God's action, or the fact of his presence and his action, that is immutable and inherent.* The form and structure of man's response, then, can be quite "free-form" and "kinetic," or even "ad-hoc."

How we see the church will largely determine our ability to be sensitive to the insights of these secular prophets. If we subscribe to the first view, or some version thereof, there is virtually no possibility for the kind of adaptation seen as necessary by these three writers. The latter view, at least, allows for the possibility of change. It will be interesting to see how the church responds to this dilemma.

Joseph H. Pearson

Zion's Warning, *Volume I, numbers 1-5 (1970) and Volume II, number 1 (Feb. 1971). Edited by Glen Stout and Barney Fuller. Published by World Redemption, La Habra, California. Distributed free by the editors.*

The Reorganized Church has traditionally made absolutistic claims about itself. We have liked to believe that Jesus organized a Church, and established the doctrines, ordained the officers, and established the "gifts of the Spirit" to meet the specifications necessary for "the true church."

But, according to our view of history, the Christian church went into apostasy because it altered the doctrines and officers in the true church, and because it forgot about the gifts of the Spirit. After about a thousand years of "darkness," Luther and the other reformers began to expose the apostasy of the church. But their reform was not enough. It was important, though, for it laid the groundwork for the Restoration, which was brought about by the latter-day prophet, Joseph Smith.

Having said this, the only problem that remains is the fact that there is more than one church that claims to be "the true church" restored by Joseph Smith. So we of the Reorganization have had to claim that while God endured more than a thousand years of apostasy before bringing about the Restoration, only fourteen years after the Restoration came into being God allowed apostasy to set in again. Thus the Reorganization sweeps aside the claims of Utah by saying they departed from the pattern, while we have restored it again.

Because only Latter Day Saint ministers have the necessary authority to preach and administer the sacraments, other Christian churches are thought to be "untrue," and their ministries invalid. Unfortunately for those who hold this marvelous view (and marvelous it is to be able to believe that one has *the true* clue to the mysteries of this world and the next), the Restoration appeared on the scene before the growth of modern biblical and historical studies. Nineteenth and twentieth century studies have demonstrated that we know very little about Jesus' earthly life, and that the church we see in the New Testament largely reflects developments a generation or so after Jesus' death.

Scholars have seen the history of early and medieval Christianity not as a period of truth and light giving way to a long period of darkness. Rather, the Church constantly renewed itself after periods of decline. The sixteenth century Anabaptists, generally ignored or condemned without a hearing, held views and practices strikingly like those of the two major Mormon churches of the nineteenth century.

Perhaps most devastating for traditional Latter Day Saint beliefs has been the conclusions of biblical scholarship. Many of our claims relative to our unique Scriptures rest on assumptions refuted by scholars. Joseph Smith and his revelations assumed a quite literal view of inspiration. The stories in Genesis about Adam, Noah, and the tower of Babel were accepted as historical events. Moses was thought to be the author of the Pentateuch, Isaiah of all 66 chapters of his book, etc.

With these early nineteenth century Protestant and Catholic assumptions about the Bible imbedded in our own latter-day scriptures, it has been harder for us to take seriously the findings of modern scholarship, notwithstanding our use of phrases like "the glory of God is intelligence." To admit that Joseph Smith was a product of his time was apparently too hard for a young, small, and insecure church to do.

But gradually we have had to face up to these problems. In the last ten or fifteen years especially, an increasing number of people within the Reorganization have engaged in serious studies of scripture, history, and theology, and concluded that our traditional beliefs need to be significantly reinterpreted. For almost all who have done so, it has been a very painful process, and they would have much preferred to maintain the traditional beliefs.

As there have been more and more RLDS men "in high places" who have come to see the validity of the use of scholarship, and have taken its conclusions seriously, it is entirely understandable that there would be a reaction from members who rightly see that the cherished "distinctives" of the church are being de-emphasized. A reaction was as inevitable as death and taxes.

Zion's Warning is perhaps the most visible manifestation to date of the reaction that has clearly set in. In operation now for over a year, six issues have been published. Five issues were published during the 1970 calendar year, dated February, April, June, September, and December. The first issue of Volume II is dated February 1971. According to the editors, "Zion's Warning is a paper totally dedicated to the cause of publishing the PURE and UNDEFILED Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed from Heaven by the Power of The Holy Ghost."

The lead headline of the first issue states in capsule form the major theme of the publication: "The Old Jerusalem Gospel Being Ousted by Top R.L.D.S. Officials." The rest of that issue was a rebuttal to the now-famous curriculum study papers of the Religious Education Department. Later issues have carried this theme in various ways. The second issue claimed that the leaders of the Reorganization are embracing ecumenism. This is an understandable position for *Zion's Warning* to take. But most of this particular paper was devoted to the ludicrous charges of right wing political extremists, who claim the councils of churches are pro-communist.

The third issue concentrated on defending the stories of Noah and the flood in Genesis. The fourth issue was largely excerpts from *Church History*, trying to show the divinity of the Reorganization. The last two issues are a potpourri of pronouncements on modernism, the social gospel, the plans of Satan, reincarnation, the current debates over polygamy and sensitivity training, as well as the persistent question as to the existence of the north country.

Zion's Warning's conviction that the church is in apostasy is very deep. Given the editors' views of the gospel as static or "given," the "apostasy" of Catholicism, Utah Mormonism, and the contemporary RLDS leadership, it is hard to tell what forms the defensive reaction might take in the future. Certainly a "True Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," created by those who sympathize with and support *Zion's Warning*, is not beyond the range of possibility.

William D. Russell

LETTERS

To the Editors:

Wayne Ham's article (September 1970) makes a valuable contribution to the intellectual life of the church. It is a modest piece of work bringing together many of the oft-discussed issues that cluster about the historical character of the *Book of Mormon*. The article points to a need for a new generation of *Book of Mormon* scholars who are free from the burden of continuing to fight nineteenth century battles and are free for the purposes of authentic inquiry.

While I am hopeful others will eventually give serious attention to the questions Ham raises, I am discouraged by Chris Hartshorn's letter in the last issue of *Courage*. It was all too typical of an earlier era, what Ham referred to as "quick and easy answers" and "characterized by polemics and apologetics." It is certainly far too late in our history to draw lines based on old shibboleths or to dismiss important questions by simplistic answers snapped out as if not daring to linger too long. Brother Hartshorn's letter seemed to reflect a faith that has all the answers, but consequently, whose God is too small to move in complex and profound ways. This impression of brittleness seemed to lend a tone of bitterness to Chris's letter reminiscent of the time when differences led to division in the church.

The central issue of the Ham article—the *Book of Mormon* as history—seems to have passed right by his critics. For example, in his conclusion Chris says, "the church is irrevocably committed to the *Book of Mormon* as Holy Scripture." Indeed, but are we committed to it as history? Men must be careful of what they pin their faith to. Later events may bring a shaking of the soul if faith is placed in personalities, specific authorship, or supposed facts of history. Ham compares the *Book of Mormon* to the Book of Ruth—one of the greatest Old Testament books—Scripture but not history. He seeks to open wide a broader base for faith and worship. Clifford Cole has said, "The problem is not convincing the world we are the church of Jesus Christ, it is in being truly the Church of Jesus Christ." The same principle applies to the *Book of Mormon*. Either it is Scripture because in it the Word of God speaks to the human condition or it isn't. Attempts to convince the world that it is history really miss the mark and might justifiably be called a "hangup."

Ham can best answer his critics in detail himself. Thoughtful people, however, are not convinced by subjective arguments from the "correct" answer backwards. Because of limitations of a letter like this I will illustrate from only one of Hartshorn's points although I believe it applies to one or two of the other letters as well. What Chris accepts as reasonable in the world of Scripture he would never accept in his real world as an editor. In fact, I seem to remember some discussion with Chris in his Herald House office when he strongly suspected that one appointee in his writing had borrowed from another author and, even though churchmen were involved, I doubt that he would have accepted the Holy Spirit "directing" both minds to write with "parallelism." The hard fact is that the *Book of Mormon* is loaded with verbatim quotes from the Old and New Testament put in the mouths of men of different centuries, languages, and culture. If we apply Ockham's razor of economy of explanation*, we do not get the easy or doctrinaire answer, but we may be closer to the truth.

My kindest explanation of the strident tone and strained answers of the critics of the Ham article is the difference between the words we use and how they are perceived. I recall a few years ago when an informal breakfast group, composed mainly of Auditorium personnel, raised in perfect freedom ideas that apparently could not be discussed now. Actually, many of the issues Ham's article discusses were openly kicked around in good fellowship then, and Chris Hartshorn was in the group. My opinion is that the church has become fearful and uncertain in a time of change. This has resulted in an awful season of ill-tempered talk and foolish actions. It may get worse before it gets better. Sociologists inform us that the nub of extremism is the relief of doubts about one's worth by denying the worth and humanity of others. A declining sense of confidence leading to resentment becomes channeled into backlash hostility that looks for someone to blame. In national politics susceptibility to right wing extremism is basically a function of status anxiety among population sectors that feel themselves declining in importance, influence, and power. Whether in politics or in the RLDS Church, such extremists are those who have more of a stake in the past than in the present or future. Saints need to examine their motives for recriminations against others and all that would separate us from one another.

An article like Ham's seems to bring to the surface an ambivalent attitude toward education, not uncommon in the church. For example, Hartshorn lets comments such as "college men use their talents to join the rabble" intrude into his criticism. While, on the one hand, it is important to note that Ham's issues have been discussed by thoughtful people for years regardless of education; on the other hand, those concerned about education have a right to be, in a profound sense. Research confirms that a college education fosters qualities in persons such as increased autonomy, tolerance for ambiguity, capacity for complex ideas, openness to new insights. Thus, at its best, education provides no answers, but a way of approaching life with questions. This threatens all forms of dogmatism, prejudice, and narrowness of mind and spirit. In defining faith and belief, the church is going to have to work very hard to avoid creating an artificial polarity which seems to force a choice between the church and education. But even more importantly, we must ask hard questions of the church. It is a primary function of religion to confront men with the hard questions of life—questions to which they must address themselves—Who am I? Where am I going? What for? As an institution the church in all honesty must not seek less for itself.

Finally, because there have been some intimations to the contrary, it should be affirmed that the church needs its Wayne Hams. It is more than just a matter of needing every note on the scale or, in a Pauline sense, all parts of the body. The challenges confronting us today seem uniquely diverse and demanding. Enduring distinctions need to be drawn between the deep and the shallow, the superstitious and the numinous, between all else and the ultimately real. As Pogo has said in his wisdom: "We are surrounded by insurmountable opportunity." Especially needed are men who can take such a challenge, not too lightly or too seriously. Men who are not constrained by the language and battlelines of the past and are free for the future — men who have the imagination and capacity to build bridges by word and deed from where we are to where God's tomorrow shall be.

Richard B. Lancaster
Oberlin, Ohio

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*This principle of analysis has been stated in several ways but basically it means that simple explanations are to be preferred to complex ones.

To the Editor:

Please drop my name from the list of the Advisory Board of your journal. I have two reasons for insisting on this action:

1. The analysis of the December issue which you asked the *Independence Examiner* to publish, and which appeared in that paper on February 27, was a sensational and unbalanced picture of the journal.

2. The placing of my article, "The Historicity of the *Book of Mormon* Examined," on page 125 as a letter-to-the-editor, which you said was the choice of the Editorial Committee, diluted its effectiveness, and is regarded as a concerted effort to denigrate my refutation of Wayne Ham's attack, in the September 1970 issue, on the validity of the Restoration scriptures.

The Ham article was given national publicity in New York, St. Louis, and Kansas City papers. This has hurt many of our members. I allege it is reasonable to think that the copy for this publicity was a plant by the editor of *Courage*, as in the case of the piece in the *Examiner*.

It seems to me that the objective of your journal is to disrupt and change the image of the church of Christ, rather than to present its "history, thought, and action" in an objective and unbiased manner.

Chris B. Hartshorn
Independence, Missouri

P.S. Please print this in your "Letters to the Editor" section, and save me the trouble of giving it publicity through other channels. C.B.H.

EDITORS' NOTE:

We regret Brother Hartshorn's resignation. He is the only author who had contributions in each of our first three issues, and his involvement will be missed.

As to his allegation about material published in papers in various cities, we assume he is referring to "New York Times" articles of May 3, 1970, and October 18, 1970, written by Wallace Turner and Edward B. Fiske, respectively, which were reprinted in several papers, including the "St. Louis Post-Dispatch." These articles were written by the reporters who signed them; to suggest otherwise is not complimentary to them. The unsigned "Independence Examiner" news story was based on a news release and a copy of the December issue which we sent to that newspaper. In the news release we focused on items in the December "Courage" which seemed most likely to be of interest to readers of the "Examiner." In recent months the issue of the ordination of women in various denominations has been the subject of news stories in the public press, so the decision of the "Examiner" to carry a story featuring this issue should not be regarded as out of the ordinary.

As to the purpose of "Courage," we feel that our publications so far have been consistent with the statement of purpose we published in our pilot issue.

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To the Editors:

Enclosed you will find the payment for a one-year subscription to *Courage*. As a monetary supporter of this endeavor, I wish to make a few observations about the September issue.

Regarding the article by Mr. Booth (September, 1970): I find the caricature of Joseph Smith appalling and the following article filled with generalizations, misinterpretations, irrelevant statements, and maledictory suggestions.

Regarding the article by Mr. Ham in the same issue: I find it vague and unnecessarily critical of a problem that is so far beyond our present understanding of the law of God it is assumptive of any man to claim the authority to critique it in the light Mr. Ham chooses. As an educated scholar of the *Book of Mormon*, I find it to be far more than "an interesting artifact of the Restoration movement in the nineteenth century." Because the tenth chapter of Moroni speaks for itself, I shall not belabor the point.

The remaining three articles I find to be the type I would expect in a publication claiming to be a journal of history, thought, and action.

I ask you to give my thoughts prayerful consideration. In a day when organized religion is being threatened from within by new forces we must all be constantly alert, aware, and responsible.

Dr. Elsie C. Burton
Lexington, Kentucky

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To the Editors:

The Summer 1970 *Dialogue* contains a review by Klaus Hansen that maintains that Mormons can be classified as "true believers" or "cultural." True believers are not affected by "disconfirmations" and the cultural Mormon doesn't believe in the historicity of Mormon Scriptures.

Doris Frederick, writing in the September 1970 *Courage* letters column, seems to represent the true believer and Wayne Ham seems to represent the cultural RLDS. I think this dichotomy should be explored further. How does the true believer ignore the disconfirmations of church history (Scriptures, first vision, etc.) and how does the cultural RLDS rationalize his continued support of the church?

I have enjoyed both issues very much. Keep up the good work.

James E. Elliott
Florissant, Missouri

To the Editors:

Just a note to compliment you on the September 1970 issue of *Courage*—especially Wayne Ham's article on the *Book of Mormon*. It was excellent, being both perceptive and related to the needs of at least some members of the church.

The fact that it need have been written at all points to one of the traditional weaknesses of this particular sectarian movement—intolerance of belief and viewpoint. If the organization is to remain at all viable this weakness must be met and surmounted; otherwise it will be doomed to the living petrification which so often befalls social institutions. The backwaters and eddies of society teem with social organizations which entomb ideas and interpretations of ideas of other times. A few of the "faithful" worship the embalmed conceptions of the past.

It is not surprising that this organization is so viewed by people from within and without. One can hardly help being impressed by the lack of effect of the organization upon the society within which it exists. It bears little resemblance to the vibrant movement which emerged from upstate New York over a century ago.

That the "church" has illusions of grandeur is self-evident. However, this is not to say that it has nothing to offer. I find my own religious heritage most valuable. I have learned much from some of its members regarding human sensitivity and concern. The interesting thing is that those who exhibit genuine humanness are not found within any single doctrinal group or point of view.

The point is simple and will not be further belabored in print. Tolerance must come if the church would survive to make a contribution in this day.

Roger W. Hershey
Round Lake Beach, Illinois

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To the Editor:

Last April when I read the italicized editorial excerpt at the head of my article on the Book of Abraham in your pilot issue of *Courage*, I noted that you had misconstrued my closing sentence, which was:

> *Above all, let the Latter Day Saint community seek a viable, twentieth century interpretation of the Book of Abraham which not only sustains its [the LDS community's] integrity, but also purges its [the LDS community's] sense of history.*

But your editorial excerpt read as follows:

> *We need a viable interpretation of the Book of Abraham which not only sustains its [the Book of Abraham's] integrity, but also purges its [the Book of Abraham's] sense of history.*

I erred in assuming that on the basis of my personal conversation with the editor, that the September issue would correct the error, by appropriate editorial statement. When it wasn't corrected, I just dismissed the matter from my mind as out of date. But now one of your readers has extended the error. Mrs. Young of St. Paul, Minnesota, not only draws attention to the wrong meaning of that last sentence, she uses that meaning to indict me as compromising my otherwise honest approach to the subject. She suggests that I tried deliberately to minimize the abrasive implications of the evidence and other conclusions presented in the article, and calls my closing sentence a disclaimer. Nothing could be farther from the truth, and Mrs. Young should be informed of that fact, as should anyone else who might have made the wrong interpretation of that sentence.

That this editorial misinterpretation made me sensitive to the unfortunate possibilities of my last sentence is obvious, by the manner in which I revised that statement when rewriting the same article for the readers of the *Saints' Herald*. Please note:

> *Above all, it is to be hoped that we will refine our sense of history and sustain our integrity by continually seeking interpretations of the Book of Abraham which will be compatible with our most responsible perceptions of our mission as the Body of Christ in the 1970's.*
>
> *("Saints' Herald," December, 1970, p. 26.)*

I trust that now the record is straight.

Richard P. Howard
Church Historian

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To the Editors:

I have just had the opportunity to read Milton Backman's review of my book, *The Mormon Churches*, as it appeared in the December issue of *Courage*, and I do wish to acknowledge the very fine spirit that attended his review.

After reading the review by T. Edgar Lyon in the Spring 1970 issue of *Dialogue*, I wrote to him and included a statement for publication in *Dialogue*, should they care to do so.

In Brother Backman's review he makes the following statement: ". . . Holm, for example, failed to realize that baptisms for the dead were practiced in Nauvoo from 1841 to immediately before the exodus in 1846 and ignores Joseph Smith's endowment ceremony." However, in Chapter XIX of my book you will find that I acknowledged that they were practicing baptism for the dead in the Mississippi River prior to the reception of the revelation given January 19, 1841 (Doctrine and Covenants 124, Utah). It was this revelation that told them to stop the practice until it could be performed in a temple provided for that purpose. The point I raised at that time was that at no time has the church been given a revelation by the prophet Joseph Smith instructing them to begin the practice. I do admit that he permitted the practice and wrote about it to the Saints in Nauvoo. I am not opposed to the doctrine as many members of the RLDS Church seem to be, but I am opposed to the methods being used by the LDS. My position is clearly stated in the book.

Brother Backman states: "He further incorrectly concluded that re-baptism was 'required of everyone that entered Salt Lake Valley' " and specifically that "re-sealing" implied reordination. The best reply that can be given is the statement made by Wilford Woodruff (a namesake of mine) and is found in the book, *Wilford Woodruff,* by Cowley on page 319: "About this time President Young felt impressed that he and the brethren of the camp should renew their covenants by baptism. August 6th, the Twelve were rebaptized by President Young. Elder Kimball baptized President Young and the latter *confirmed* his brethren and *re-sealed* upon them all their former blessings. . . . The practice of the Saints coming into the Valley to renew their covenants by baptism was followed for many years, but later, when organizations abroad became more perfect, and the Saints came with speedy and direct transportation from their native lands to the stakes of Zion, this practice has been discontinued as not being of the same necessity as in the early pioneer days."

From the above statement we not only see a perversion of one of the important ordinances in the church, and I am aware that some of this took place in Nauvoo. They even practiced baptizing for sickness. The fact that the prophet allowed them to do so does not make it right. There is another factor to be considered and that pertains to confirmation that was also a part of the baptismal ceremony. If confirmation was necessary, then reordination or re-sealing was just as necessary. It is from this that I have formed my conclusions.

In my reply to Brother Lyon you will note that I feel that the real problem that exists between the churches is based upon attempts to so glorify the prophet that no fault could be found in him. No man is ever this infallible, and so long as he is human, he can never be infallible. Joseph Smith was a prophet of God only when God so used him. He certainly was not acting as a prophet when he allowed John C. Bennett to wield the influence he did for a time in Nauvoo. If God had anything to do with the Bennett episode, then He would have to take the blame for the mistakes that were made.

Brother Backman also mentioned my position on the *Book of Abraham* and its place in the church. The most recent information on this subject is contained in the many articles by Hugh Nibley in the *Improvement Era* and in the articles that appeared in *Dialogue* which were written by well qualified men. I am very happy that at no time did the prophet ever claim to have been directed by God in the purported translation of the manuscripts. Even though Brother Backman quotes Wilford Woodruff's statement that the Lord was blessing Joseph with power to reveal ancient records as old as Abraham or Adam, this was never claimed by Joseph Smith. This is an excellent demonstration of the danger that confronts us when we endeavor to evaluate everything the prophet did as an act inspired by God. At no time did the prophet ever claim this privilege and it is a disservice to him when we, over a century later, endeavor to read scripture into all of his acts.

Having given consideration to the review, I do wish to express my sincere appreciation for the kindness Brother Backman has shown and for his recognition of my sincere desire to see a much greater compatibility between the two major parts of the Restoration Church.

Francis W. Holm, Sr.
Kansas City, Missouri

To the Editors:

Congratulations on your editorial, "The Role of Women in the Church," in the December 1970 issue: "In the larger society the extension of equal status to women and their full participation with men is an idea whose time has come."

Now let's see; out of eight people on the Editorial Committee of *Courage*, two are women—25 percent. Could definitely be better. Ah yes, the nebulous Advisory Board of *Courage* . . . What's this! Forty-six members on the Advisory Board, only five of whom are women? A mere 10.8 percent? What was that again about ". . . the extension of equal status to women and their full participation with men is an idea whose time has come"?

Carolyn I. Raiser
Lamoni, Iowa

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To the Editors:

Just a word about William D. Russell's opinion of the World Conference (*Courage*, September, 1970). In his view the main issue before the church now is whether we should "continue to hold a narrow attitude toward other Christian denominations," thinking that ours is "the true church" and that "we have nothing to gain from contact with other Christian denominations," or should we follow the leadership of the church which seems to be "moving away from this narrow attitude"?

If I felt for one moment that the Reorganized Church was not the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, or that it ought to "hold to something of a 'middle-of-the-road' position" (neither hot nor cold), as Brother Ralston put it in his opinion, rather than working, seeking, praying, and fasting for a prophetic leadership, then I would go and find, if I could, and join a church that would seek to more fully accomplish that which the Restoration was commissioned to do in 1830 under the leadership of Joseph Smith, Jr. That we have strayed from the ordinances, and have broken the everlasting covenant, is very apparent. "Every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world." The Restoration's image of God today more nearly resembles that of the great theologians of Saint Paul School of Theology, as per teaching of Russell, etc., than it does that of the latter-day work in 1830. Permit me to quote briefly from some of the early revelations to Joseph:

1. "Behold, this is my doctrine: Whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church; whosoever declareth more or less than this, the same is not of me, but is against me; therefore, he is not of my church" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 3:16).

2. "The elders, priests, and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in which is the fullness of the gospel; . . . and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach" (*D. and C.* 42:5).

3. "Ye are not sent forth to be taught [by W. Paul Jones and others not ordained of me—F. T. S.], but to teach the children of men the things which I have put into your hands by the power of my Spirit; and ye are to be taught from on high'" (*D. and C.* 43:4). Think of the *Book of Mormon*, the Inspired Version of the Bible, and the early revelations, all given to us, not by intellectuals, but "by the power of my Spirit."

4. When Christ taught with authority and much assurance, and the Jews marveled at him, he answered them that "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me," so the early elders of the Restoration were commissioned to teach the doctrine of Christ, and that only, as they went out to teach and to preach.

They were sent out two by two, "preaching the word by the way, saying none other things than which the prophets and apostles have written, and that which is taught them by the Comforter, through the prayer of faith" (*D. and C.* 52:3).

5. No man standing before a class or before a congregation, and especially in the pulpit, has any authority, or Christ-given right to teach or preach anything save that which he verily knows to be the truth of Christ. It is an easy thing to teach or preach that which some other elder has so declared without knowing for himself whether it is verily the truth.

If Joseph Smith used something other than the Urim and Thummim, such as the "peep stone," then the purposes of God were frustrated, and we could go on and on. It is as it has been testified of or we are denying their testimony, and if so, we might just as well "go a-fishing," or "fold up our tents and go home."

6. If sections 2, 3, 42, and 52 were true in the 1830's, then they are still true today, and the injunction to read and study all "good books" (which is leading many away from the basic teachings of the early Restoration) that we hear so much has either been misapplied, misinterpreted, or is a phony. Let's examine these statements carefully.

Doctrine and Covenants 85:21 says, "I give unto you a commandment, that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom; teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that is expedient for you to understand." There is nothing here yet in conflict with the early revelations referred to, but have we been diligent in this?

In Section 85 the Lord is basically talking to the church, and then He starts verse 36 with "My friends [could it be more specifically referring to the priesthood?], call your solemn assembly, as I have commanded you; and as all have not faith [there is a qualification here] seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning even by study, and also by faith." I fear that we have neglected the part where we are to seek learning *by faith*. The Lord has reiterated again and again that we are to teach and preach only the doctrine of the kingdom, and without first searching how can we know which are the best, better, or just good books?

In *Doctrine and Covenants* 7:5b, the Lord instructs Joseph Smith, the prophet, to "become acquainted with all good books, and with languages, tongues, and people." Why is this lifted out of context and given prominence as it is today, to the exclusion of the preached Word of God?

No priesthood member, or any other member has any moral or spiritual right, or Christ-given authority to get up in a pulpit, or to write in the pages of our official church publications, and to teach, preach, or present "vain philosophy," questionable doctrine or anything that in any way would disturb the faith of our people; nor does any administrative officer of our college, church, or congregations have any right to permit this to go on. The elders of this great Latter Day Work are to "see that my law is kept," and that the doctrine of Christ is taught. In permitting such to go on throughout the church one can readily see why so many are falling away from the "faith that was once delivered to the saints."

Personally, I feel sorry for men of the priesthood who do not have a burning testimony of the divinity of the *Book of Mormon* and this great Latter Day Work. I know that they can receive such, for I have just such a testimony, and feel deeply that this great Latter Day movement has all the answers for the problems of the world if we will but apply them and look to God for the answers. We have as yet not touched, or tapped a smattering of our own God-given resources, given "to us by the power of His Spirit." This is why we are in such confusion today. I fear we are following the ways of the world in almost every facet of our endeavor.

"Ye have read and seek to teach others. Why will ye not first understand? Have ye not fulfilled the Scriptures? . . . Your prophets are hidden and your seers are covered. . . . But remember, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as potter's clay, for shall the thing framed say of Him that framed it . . . he hath no understanding and we must needs improve his method?" (From a prophecy delivered by Joseph Luff on June 12, 1923.)

Francis T. Schrunk
Lincoln, Nebraska

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To the Editors:

Thanks for sending me the book review that Robert Matthews wrote on *Joseph Smith's "New Translation" of the Bible* (December 1970, p. 117).

The problem he mentions came about through our use of Arthur Starks' marked Inspired Version Bible that he used in preparing our *Concordance Supplement for the Inspired Version.* When checking over the missing passages it turns out that these were not identified in his book. Again, since we followed his book, we erred in accepting his markings showing some of the minor variations Matthews speaks of under number 3. Each of his criticisms is valid, and we will attempt to correct these faults if and when the book is published again.

Paul A. Wellington
Editorial Director
Herald House
Independence, Mo.

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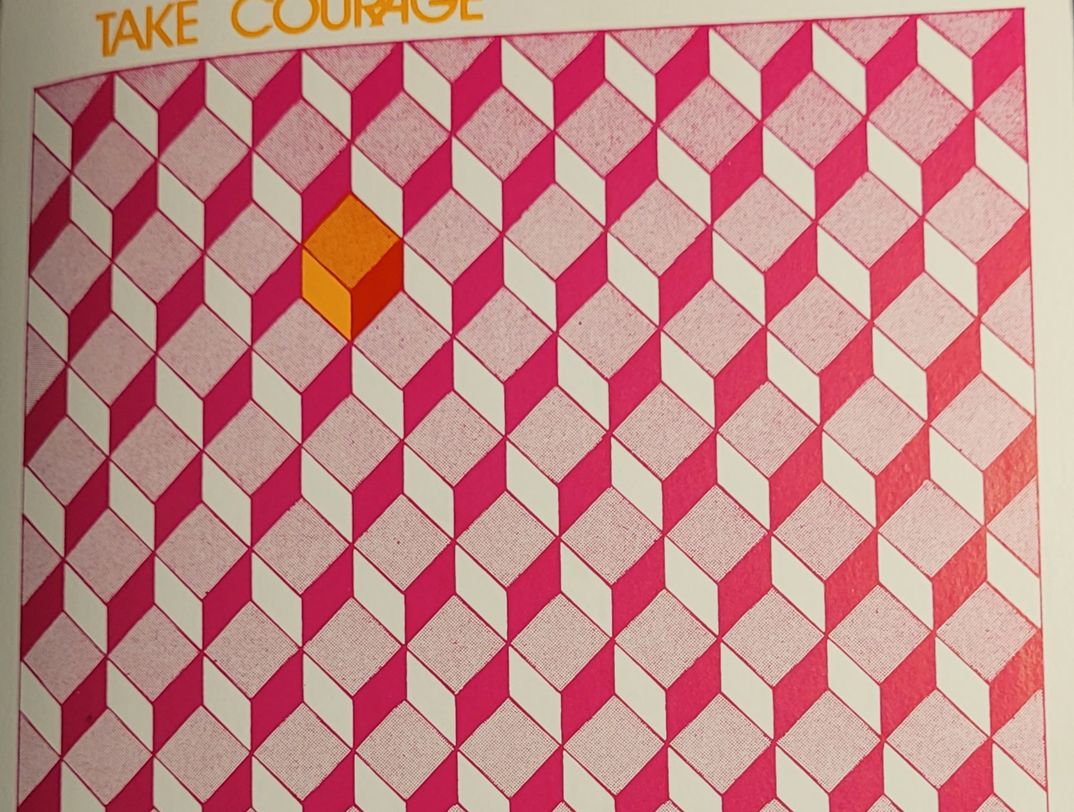

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